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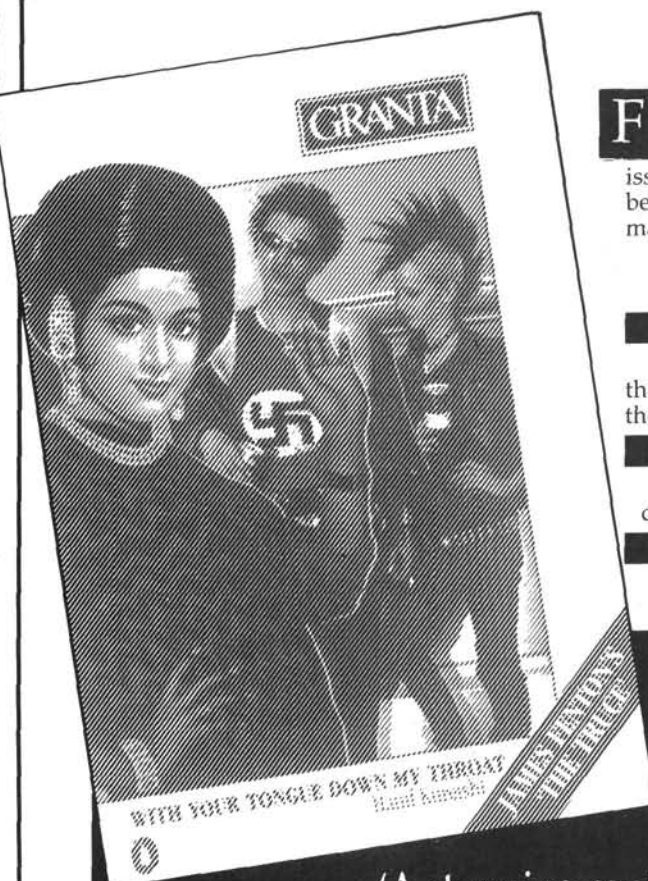


THE STALKER AFFAIR



LICENSED TO KILL?

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Who saw him die?

MICHAEL TIGHE was a fresh-faced 17-year-old boy of simple needs who was content to remain in and around his home at Lurgan in Northern Ireland. He had never shown the slightest interest in political or terrorist activity. He was a good and considerate son who had several friends of about the same age, including 19-year-old Martin McCauley. Together he and McCauley had climbed through the open window of a barn by a cottage his friend was looking after while its owner was away. Tighe died there in a hail of police bullets; McCauley was seriously injured in the gunfire.

No one who wasn't there can state with confidence what actually happened. Three old guns, though with no ammunition, were in the barn. McCauley was later found guilty of possession of one of the old rifles. At his trial, RUC officers stated that they had come upon the two boys in the barn while on a routine patrol; both were pointing rifles and were fired upon after a sergeant had shouted warnings. Later they admitted that their presence in the locality had not been routine. (They had in fact staked out the barn which had been used to store IRA explosives used to murder three RUC officers in a landmine explosion at Kin-nego a month before.)

But the judge cast doubts even on their modified evidence, especially about where they had been when the shots were fired and whether they had actually seen the boys holding rifles. He decided finally to exclude all the police evidence which he said was tainted with lies. McCauley gave evidence that the police had fired without warning, first killing Tighe and then severely wounding him. The judge disbelieved him too.

What the judge did not know was that everything which had happened at the barn had been recorded by a sophisticated bug hidden there. Any shouts, warnings or conversations, the sequence of shots and subsequent events — all this evidence was available on a secret tape which could reveal the truth of the incident. Yet it was withheld from the court and, as we all know very well, from the independent police officer appointed in turn to investigate allegations of a shoot-to-kill policy in Northern Ireland and subsequent attempts at cover-ups.

In his autobiography, John Stalker says that his discovery of the existence of the tape "created very real anxiety". He makes it clear why it might. "If the two warnings had not been shouted by the police, if McCauley had been shot for the second time after he had said he would come out, or if the tape recording indicated, by analysis, that the first shots fired were, as I suspected, from a single-shot police Ruger rifle and not a submachine gun, then



the police had lied on oath . . . I believed it was in the interests of the RUC to show me that their men had acted truthfully and honourably. If they had not, the offences committed would be far more serious than perjury — the evidence would have supported a charge of murder against one or more of the policemen."

We devote two articles (pages 10-12) to the alleged shoot-to-kill policy and Stalker's inquiry. They show how Stalker's determination to obtain that tape led to his removal from the inquiry in the most suspicious circumstances. But here we want to reflect on Stalker's motives for so strongly pursuing that tape. Stalker writes:

As an individual, I also passionately believed that if a police force of the United Kingdom could, in cold blood, kill a seventeen-year-old youth with no terrorist or criminal convictions, and then plot to hide the evidence from a senior police officer deputed to investigate it, then the shame belonged to us all. This is the act of a Central American assassination squad — truly of a police force out of control . . . I set for [my team] what was undoubtedly the most important single objective at which I am ever likely to aim — the obtaining of that evidence. The cover stories, the lies, the obstruction were insignificant when placed alongside state murder. I expected others to think the same. I was mistaken.

In his interim report to Sir John Hermon, Chief Constable of the RUC, Stalker says he wrote that "after the most careful re-investigation I believed I could present a great deal of extra evidence, including independent forensic findings, that would indicate that the five men shot dead in their cars were unlawfully killed by members of the RUC . . . I also said that the indications were that Michael Justin Tighe might also have been unlawfully killed, but I would reserve my final recommendation on that until I had received the tape of the killing . . ." Copies of the report were sent to Sir Barry Shaw, the Northern Irish DPP, and to Sir Philip Myers, the Inspector of Constabulary at the Home Office who had commissioned his inquiry, and to a senior MI5 officer.

The issues — moral and political — which Stalker raises are not going to go away. Sir Patrick Mayhew has now made a firm attempt to put a final lid on the whole affair. Everyone in Britain who believes in the rule of law must unite to make sure that he doesn't succeed.

Michael Tighe's parents are quiet and dignified people. As British citizens they are entitled to expect that justice will be done — and be seen to be done. And that of course is in the interests of all British citizens. The tape must be produced and the full facts made known; if appropriate, criminal proceedings should follow. That way lies true national security. □

DIARY

Now that Kurt Waldheim has been found as guilty as one could expect even by his own government's commission of inquiry, can Faber and Faber really intend to publish *The Waldheim Files*, a book which argues that the Austrian President's war record is spotless? Apparently so. The book, by an American freelance journalist called Michael Palumbo, is due out in June. It claims "the UN war crime dossier was prepared against him in 1947 by the Soviets and Yugoslavs for blackmail purposes". According to Faber, Palumbo "shows that Waldheim is the victim of a big international plot engineered by the Israelis". (Palumbo's previous work, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, is charmingly described by his publisher as "quite anti-Jewish in a way".) And will Palumbo adjust his theory at all to take in this week's Austrian report? "He's got one more chapter to write," Faber tells me, "so there's still room for manoeuvre." A bit late for that, I should have thought, unless the manoeuvre in question is a three-point turn.

"In the sex act a normal woman responds with complete submission to, and with the desire to please, the protective, authoritative, dominant man," according to David Stayt in the February issue of *Vive La Difference*, journal of the Campaign for the Feminine Woman. "The submissive female role is as nature and God intended, and it is one of creative fulfilment and joy." Stayt is the chairman of the Campaign, which he founded three years ago to promote "the value and validity of the different sex roles, marriage and the family unit". He claims that its objects "accord with the Bible".

In other words it's a haven for perverts. Stayt, for instance, reveals in his magazine that he is a fan of the film *Bluebeard*, in which Richard Burton "shows one way of making a proper woman of an ardent feminist". How so? He "knocks her to the floor with a heavy slap on the face. She gets up and tries to attack again, but he pushes her down, and slaps her again and again". The feminist thus discovers "the wonder of being a feminine woman and sees the man as rightly her master". Veery interesting. Stayt, almost audibly panting, draws a simple moral from the movie: men "must enforce the natural and proper sex roles, and must do this upon their wives and girlfriends both verbally and physically if necessary. As one woman recently wrote, a short spanking, not brutal or in anger, can sometimes work wonders and create or restore a loving proper man-woman relationship."

So: does David Stayt spank his wife? I rang him to inquire. "Er, er, I've never had occasion to, either with my wife or with my daughters, er, er, because they're very feminine women, I'm pleased to say." Lucky them.

While talking to David Stayt I couldn't resist the urge to ask what the Campaign for the Feminine Woman thinks of Margaret Thatcher. Not a lot, he said. "Prime minister is a man's job." But all that pious drivel about the family unit and the scriptures — surely Thatcher and the Campaign

were kindred spirits? At this Stayt revealed that no, he didn't agree with her politically. "I was on the National Council of CND in the Sixties, I was on the Committee of 100 and was arrested outside the Houses of Parliament and elsewhere. I'm still at one with CND's principles." A Labour voter, then? Certainly not: Labour governments had whittled away the National Health Service, so he didn't consider Labour a socialist party at all. "If there was a proper socialist party I'd probably be voting for it." What he wants is a socialist party which is strongly anti-feminist, anti-homosexual and pro-spanking. Perhaps Labour's famous policy review will do the trick.

And then again, perhaps not. Who can fathom the mysterious workings of the Movement? Certainly not the Springfield ward of Tooting Labour Party, which wrote to Neil Kinnock last month expressing the hope that "essential principles" would not be sacrificed in the policy review: "The party needs policies philosophically distinct from those of the parties supporting capitalism," the branch suggested politely, "or its whole raison d'être disappears."

One of Kinnock's staff, Jenny Stringer, replied at once. "Mr Kinnock has asked me to assure you that during this parliamentary session the Opposition has with considerable force exposed a whole range of government policies." Yes, yes, well done, jolly good — but how about the policy review? She came to it in the last paragraph: "We are undertaking a rigorous assessment and review of all our policies." This much the Springfield branch knew. That, indeed, was why the original

ROGER WODDIS

Not for your eyes

The members would be seen as clueless,
Or some mad fool would seize the mace,
And all would be reduced to chaos
If cameras came within this place.
Sir Arnold Allmouth would be shouting,
And Edna Slurry full of gin;
It would inflame the voting classes,
We dare not let the cameras in.

It hardly helps the cause of freedom
To let the lights and cables through,
And show the kind of rowdy creatures
Who occupy this ancient zoo.
In every humble home and bedsit
The public would be free to watch
The Speaker crying, "Order! Order!"
And being answered, "Mine's a scotch."

The opportunists would be tempted
To actions that we all deplore,
With hundreds of the disaffected
Abseiling to the Commons floor.
But there's an even starker horror,
Far worse than the persistent cough:
The chilling sound across the nation
Of yawning viewers switching off.

letter was written. But what of the party's *raison d'être*? Answer came there none.

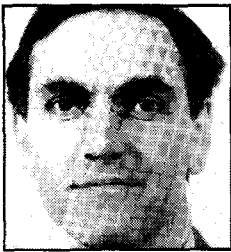
Walking in Hungerford last weekend, I was surprised to see that many shop windows carried posters advertising a jamboree to be presented by the Newbury and Reading Wargames Society this Saturday. There will be Wargames, Participation Wargames and (by way of variety) a Wargames Competition. Oh, and a bring and buy stall. The poster doesn't specify what you're meant to bring or buy, but the title of the event — "A Call to Arms" — offers a hefty clue. I'm sure Hungerford's most famous son, Michael Ryan, would have thoroughly approved of this war-is-fun celebration. What a shame he won't be able to attend.

If you're reading this before 1.15 pm on Friday, there's still time for a flutter on the US trade figures, which will be released at 1.30. This service comes courtesy of IG Index. Those of us who have always maintained that the stock market is an up-market betting shop owe a debt of gratitude to IG Index for emphasising the point so shamelessly. As Francis Byng, one of the firm's directors, tells me: "We take bets on anything — stock market indices, currencies, Treasury bonds and gilts, commodities, coffee, cocoa, sugar, precious metals. Anything." This is the second month on which IG has taken bets on the American trade deficit. The system works like this. IG says it thinks the figures will be in a certain range (between \$13.55 and \$14.25 billion, in this case). You can bet, say, £1,000 that they will be higher (or lower, if you prefer). If you're right, you win the amount of your stake for each billion dollars that IG is wrong. So if the deficit turns out to be \$2 billion higher, you win £2,000. Money for jam? Up to a point. Uniquely in betting, this is one game where you can lose more than your stake. If you bet that the true figure will be higher than IG's estimate and it turns out to be, say, \$3 billion lower, you will owe them £3,000.

Francis Byng sees no end to the wizard fun. "We're thinking we might move more into official figures," he tells me. You might take bets on the unemployment statistics, for instance? "Yes indeed we might. If we think we can make a book on the unemployment figures, we'll do it." I'm sure it will please the jobless to think that someone's making a fast quid out of their misfortune.

To see The Who performing "My Generation" on Monday night, 25 years on, was to die a little. Well, quite a lot actually. Why don't you all f-f-fade away? Roger Daltrey sneered, as ever. Don't try and dig what we all say. The last time I was aware of Roger Daltrey saying anything was in a credit card advert, and his message, if memory serves, was "American Express: Don't Leave Home Without It". Dig it.

Francis Wheen



BEN PIMLOTT

Can Neil Kinnock continue to rely on the backing of the TGWU?

TRADE UNIONS are always a problem for Labour Party leaders, who like to declare their complete detachment from them. Unions provide the cash, they are important, they are what the labour movement is all about. But, goes the argument, they are socially embarrassing and they are best kept out of sight.

Recently, the unions have shown an increasing willingness to accept the low profile which Labour's public relations advisers require of them. The reason is simple. Under Thatcher they have lost battles, prestige, freedoms, members. They desperately want a Labour government and are prepared to suffer any humiliation to get one. When, at last year's TUC, Neil Kinnock pointedly announced that Labour would not pander to "sectional interests", the barons — against whom this remark was directed — actually clapped. Similarly, the outcome of the Dave Warburton affair (when the G & M's political officer dared to make public criticisms of the party leader) was a salutary punishment for the miscreant, from the union itself.

Does this kind of thing carry conviction? It seems unlikely. For the reality is not a reduction of union involvement in Labour affairs, but a sizable increase in it. Take, for example, the recent ballot for the executive of the Transport and General Workers' Union, which ended last week, the results of which are to be announced at the end of the month. It would be an exaggeration to say that the entire strategy of the NEC and the shadow cabinet is likely to be affected by the outcome. But not much of one.

The TGWU has been badly battered by Thatcherism, and its membership is down by a third. Yet it is still the principal power broker in the movement, a position which it has held for half a century. In the thirties, it saw off the pacifists, in order to give Labour a credible foreign policy; in the forties and fifties, it underwrote the leadership of Attlee and Gaitskell; in 1960, following the election of Frank Cousins as general secretary, it tipped the movement leftwards, bringing the biggest Labour Party split since the war; in the seventies, it provided the Social Contract, and also the Winter of Discontent. In the present decade, it has played a huge part in the constitutional decisions on mandatory re-selection and the electoral college, which — *inter alia* — led directly to the choice of a TGWU-sponsored MP, Neil Kinnock, as party leader.

There is no reason to believe that this great union, with a membership that is now a microcosm of bedrock Labour electoral support, will abandon its tradition of involvement. On the contrary. Not only does the impossibility of doing business with the Thatcher government give it a keen, day-to-day interest in the parliamentary arena, but the existence of the electoral college means that any actual or would-be party leader or deputy has to pay closer attention to its opinions than ever before.

At the same time, what was once seen as a slumbering giant has been politicised in the last

decade to an unprecedented degree. Until the 1979 election, TGWU politics could be characterised in terms of the attitudes of the general secretary. Then came the polarising effects of Labour's civil war, and the weak reign of Moss Evans. The power vacuum was filled by the executive and a dominant left group led by the Bennite Walter Greendale, who was eventually ousted in 1986, but not forgotten. The present line-up — a 21-18 majority behind the chairmanship of Brian Nicholson and against the left (with Ron Todd, the general secretary, as a won't-rock-the-boat left-wing presence) — is deeply satisfying to Kinnock's office. Hence this year's executive elections are being watched with greater concern than ever in the recent past.

‘The struggle [within the TGWU] is a labour movement War of the Roses, with each side more concerned about personalities and power than issues’

Actually, the battle cannot be seen in simple left-right terms. It has more to do with blood feuds than with ideology. A Nicholsonite source was quoted last week as saying: "A hard-left victory would mean the TGWU becoming the Militant Tendency's poodle." The remark says more about the passions engendered than the reality (there is, at most, one Militant sympathiser on the present executive). Rather than headbangers versus opportunists, the struggle is a labour movement version of the Wars of the Roses, with each side more concerned about personalities and power than issues.

NATIONAL POLITICS provides the symbolic citadels which one side or the other has to capture and be seen to occupy. Hence, if the left were to gain a majority, the outside world would begin to feel the effects. The executive would not challenge Kinnock, but it would feel less squeamish about Hattersley, and there would be a substantial shift in support for candidates in this year's Labour NEC election. More important, the new team would view with far greater suspicion the shift in attitude to policy among the Labour leadership, which has been given dramatic endorsement in the Kinnock-Hattersley document.

Some of it would not encounter more than token opposition. There might not be serious resistance, for instance, to the ditching of traditional attitudes to the EEC, or to nationalisation. Both are seen as pretty inevitable. According to the new statement, Labour is now in

favour of individual rights (wasn't it always?) and of market forces. That need not mean too much. But what about incomes policies? Above all, what of unilateralism?

At present, the Labour Party is composed of committed, ardent, even defiant unilateralists: Neil Kinnock, most MPs when they face their general committees, even Brian Nicholson. Last weekend, lest there be any uncertainty, Bryan Gould made a statement on television about it, which was, however, significantly measured. "I have no doubt," he said, "that we will adhere to the policy that a Labour government would find nuclear weapons both morally and militarily wrong for this country." Nevertheless, in the eyes of the opinion pollsters, currently the most crucial arbiters of ideological thinking, unilateralism is the biggest single obstacle to electoral victory. As I have already argued in this column, there are different interpretations than can be placed upon the term. Certainly, there are all sorts of helpful suggestions which the policy review may yet be able to advance.

Vital to their success, however, is the attitude of the TGWU. For no major trade union has been so consistently loyal to the principle of unilateralism over a period of thirty years. Even during the decade when the issue disappeared from view, there were several TGWU regional committees which kept the flame alight, retaining their affiliation to CND. It was a TGWU resolution at the 1973 Labour Party conference that brought the most emphatic reaffirmation of unilateralism since the days of Frank Cousins. It was the TGWU which rammed unilateralism down the throats of a bitterly hostile shadow cabinet after the 1979 defeat, precipitating the SDP defection.

Hence the near-adoption by last summer's TGWU biennial conference of a motion that would restrict the unilateralist commitment to a mere referendum on the subject, after a general election, was a very significant straw in the wind. The executive did not back the motion. But neither did it strive to block it. The possibility of a future turnabout on the issue may thus seem great.

If the right wins the executive election, Neil Kinnock could be lucky enough to be extricated from a particularly painful hook, without having to wriggle off it. But if the left wins, an adherence to the union's traditional stance is much more likely to be maintained.

Will the left win? John Prescott's friends probably got their sums right when they persuaded their candidate, who would certainly have gained from a left victory, not to make a deputy leadership challenge. Despite optimistic leaks to the press, it is unlikely that the left will do much more than marginally narrow the gap. Nevertheless, the relief from the Kinnock camp will be audible when the result is known. The party leader will not be able to take the support of Britain's biggest union for granted. But the party's policy review, whose timetable has been carefully geared to the announcement of the result, will rapidly gather momentum. □

Treachery and rabble rousing

ELEVEN GDR peace, ecology and human rights activists arrested in January on charges of "rabble-rousing" and "treason" were released this week after thousands of people packed Protestant churches throughout the country to hold candle-light vigils protesting against the imprisonments. Any victory celebrations, however, have been muted by the knowledge that for most of the eleven the price of their release was emigration from the GDR.

The first to arrive in West Germany was Stephan Krawczyk, a 31-year-old singer, and his wife, theatre director Freya Klier. On their arrival in the West they said they had left the GDR against their will after being confronted with the choice of emigrating or spending eight years in prison.

Krawczyk was once awarded state music prizes but was banned from public performances after he resigned from the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) three years ago. He became a cause célèbre after he was banned from performing in churches because he read out an open letter to Kurt Hager, the SED's chief of ideology, criticising cultural policy and demanding *glasnost* in the GDR.

His songs touch on travel restrictions, militarisation, the secret police and the conflicts of everyday life. Inevitably comparisons are made with Wolf Biermann, the critical GDR singer deprived of his citizenship in 1976.

The scale of the protests took both the church leadership and the GDR's ageing Politburo by surprise. In the past, protests have usually been confined to the run-down Prenzlauer Berg district of Berlin, where many of the activists live and work. For the past three weeks, however, thousands of people, by no means drawn only from activist groups, have packed nightly "solidarity" services in churches in Berlin and many other towns and cities to offer prayers for those in gaol and to cross-examine church leaders about their negotiations with the government.

Though the services were intended to support those in prison, they became at times rallies in support of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policies. While the leadership of the ruling Socialist Unity Party prevaricates about its response to Gorbachev, the GDR's Protestant church makes little secret of its support for the Communist leader. "*Glasnost* and *Perestroika* have to be on the agenda of the GDR," church leader Manfred Becker declared to applause in one of the church vigils.

There is no doubt that Gorbachev is popular in the GDR as no Soviet Communist leader has ever been. "To learn from the Soviet Union means to learn to win" is a slogan drummed into thousands of GDR school children in the fifties and sixties from kindergarten to university. "You used to have to learn the slogan by rote," remarked one university student last month, "now if you hang it from your windows you're called an enemy of the people." Over the last month, the slogan has been appearing as "subversive" graffiti on East Berlin walls.

Widespread protests erupted when police arrested the leaders of the 'Initiative for Peace and Human Rights' on charges of 'treasonable

contacts', charges which can cover contact with any foreign organisation. Unlike "rabble-rousing" — which Krawczyk, Klier and others previously arrested were charged with — "treasonable contacts" carry hefty prison sentences. Initiative's main offence seems to have been publishing articles about *glasnost*.

At the same time as the second wave of arrests, the GDR's press began a campaign against "anti-socialist underground oppositional" groups and their "paymasters in West Berlin" linked to "circles known to be connected to Western intelligence agencies", a style of reporting that was thought to have disappeared in the fifties. For the first time in years, the official party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* mounted a direct attack on sections of the Protestant church for giving shelter to such groups.

The signs are that the actions by 80-year old Erich Mielke's Ministry of State Security were directed as much against GDR leader Erich Honecker's policy of cautious liberalisation "from above" and openness towards the West as against the independent groups themselves.

Furious arguments have raged inside the SED since a group of party experts last year published a joint statement with West Germany's Social Democrats on "ideological debate", which many people inside the GDR saw as the first sign of *glasnost* with a German face. Ironically, Otto Reinhold, the Central Committee member responsible for the document, was questioned at the time about the Wolf Biermann affair. "Problems, contradictions and unresolved questions that exist in one's own country," he said then, "cannot be solved by pushing someone out of the country, or simply assuming that they will go."

Andreas Müller

Knocking back the lead

GOVERNMENT scientists in England and Scotland have privately recommended that the current limits on lead in drinking water should be drastically tightened up. This follows recent research showing how even very low levels of lead pollution could harm young children.

The European Commission's limit on lead in drinking water, effectively 100 microgrammes per litre, came into force in 1985. At the time supplies of water in Britain were in breach of the limit. In December last year the government revealed that there were still 85 water supplies in Scotland over the limit. Even in 1990, it said, 15 per cent of the Scottish population will be living in water supply areas which do not comply with the Commission's standard.

The government has asked the Commission to permit a five-year delay. But meanwhile the Environment Commissioner, Stanley Clinton Davis, has accused it of breaking the law governing the quality of drinking water; he is considering legal action.

Now scientists in the Department of the Environment in London and the Scottish Home and Health Department in Edinburgh have come to the conclusion that in order to protect children's well-being the Commission's limit should be

reduced by up to six times. The *New Statesman* has learnt that an internal 1986 DoE paper suggested a limit of 30 microgrammes per litre for adults and 15 for infants. Scottish Office experts favour 20. This reflects the latest thinking in America where the Administration's Environmental Protection Agency has urged a reduction of the level of lead in drinking water from 50 to 20 microgrammes per litre.

The British government, however, will not be keen to accept a limit in this range, not least because it could cost up to £2 billion to make the changes necessary. Water supplies would have to be specially treated and lead piping, the main source of lead in water, would have to be replaced. An official spokeswoman for the Department of the Environment said this week that there was "no reason to change our policy until we receive medical advice to the contrary".

Researchers at Edinburgh University discovered that the exposure of children to lead levels below the Commission's limit had a small but harmful effect on their performance in ability and attainment tests. They concluded that there was probably no safe level of exposure to lead and said that steps being taken to reduce exposure should be "reinforced".

Rob Edwards

God's own bullies

THE GENERAL SYNOD of the Church of England has nothing to do with representative democracy or public accountability. It has everything to do with party rivalry and theological fisticuffs. If, in this playground, a few minorities get trampled underfoot for the sake of church doctrine or biblical purity then so be it. This last week's playtime casualty was gays and lesbians, as the House of Laity jumped in to the general mêlée to deliver a few kicks while they're down.

Unlike the Palace of Westminster across the road, the synod successfully gives employment to three parties in what turns out to be a three-chamber legislature. Each of the parties has a distinct view of their common church. The Anglo-Catholic loyalist knows that the Church of England is, in essence, the Church of Rome in exile: the estranged daughter who has only to keep her nose clean of liberal besmirchment to be welcomed back to the bosom of mother Rome. The Evangelical knows the church to be reformed and biblical, almost entirely free of Rome's detestable enormities but tragically in the grasp of those dangerous liberals which form the third party — more preached against than preaching and trying to be a bunch of nice chaps.

Meanwhile each of the houses of synod sees itself as having its own particular role. The laity seek to counteract the overweening sacerdotalism of the clergy and the dreadful fuzziness of the bishops. The clergy seek to curb the worst liberal excesses of the bishops and the mulishness of the laity. The bishops try to save themselves and us from the sheer awfulness of the other two. Thus are the battle lines drawn as members of synod bow their heads in prayer to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in showing everybody else just how wrong they are.

And so it was that the House of Laity easily passed a motion supporting the House of Bishops

in their seeming dislike of gay people in the ministry. The real function of the "support" motion was to prevent backsliding among the bishops and to urge the more outspoken into new acts of judgment and discrimination.

Perhaps even the laity are tired or embarrassed by the 'pulpit poofs' debate because Monday's debate was a pretty lacklustre affair and the level of debate neither passionate nor elevated. The real punch had already been delivered in an earlier debate by John Selwyn-Gummer (if this man is really a product of an Anglican parsonage are we not entitled to know what on earth went wrong?) who had, with a virtuoso display of vituperation wrapped up in the banner of the True Faith, roundly condemned the Archbishop of York for opposing clause 28 of the Local Government bill.

Non-Christians (among whom the writer cannot number himself) might like to ask why a body composed of supposedly loving and self-giving people could regard the lives of an abused minority with a light mixture of ill-informed comment and boredom.

Geoffrey Thompson

● Clause 28, due to be debated again by the House of Lords at its report stage on 16 February, will again be subjected to a flurry of amendments from both sides of the House. It's unlikely to be significantly weakened, however; whips can instruct their lordships to turn up to the debate but not how to vote, and opposition peers are not all pitted against the government on this one. Because the clause has already been amended by the government there is a chance that it may be debated again by the Commons. But unless intense lobbying pays off the only hope of blocking it may be "playing for time"; the government is reportedly anxious that the amount of controversial legislation it is trying to push through could mean it runs out of time for the poll tax.

In the meantime, a number of councils are discussing non-compliance if Clause 28 is given the Royal Assent on 1 June; Liberal-run Tower Hamlets was one of the first to pass a motion (27 January) condemning it as an attack on civil liberties and declaring that until a judicial review forces a change of practice its policies will not change.

Off yer bike

TWO *New Statesman* journalists have won *What the Papers Say* awards for 1987. Duncan Campbell was declared Investigative Journalist of the Year for "being single-minded, even obsessive, in uncovering the truth . . . and exposing facts which others would prefer to keep secret." Mike Scott said that Campbell "stands alone in this respect". Duncan Campbell has already won the Freedom of Information Campaign's media award. Both awards were for the outstanding *Secret Society* series of articles and BBC2 programmes — and especially the revelations about the secret Zircon spy satellite. Edward Pearce, who writes also for the *Sunday Times* and *Daily Express*, received the What the Papers Say award of Columnist of the Year for "his acid wit". Not everyone at the media luncheon was pleased at Campbell's award. "They shouldn't just have knocked him off his bike," grunted one veteran with the characteristic roseate hues of Fleet Street, "they should have run him over." And off he stumped in a huff.

Free world; free words

IN A SMALL room at the US Embassy in London 15 journalists are sitting staring at three TV screens; each shows the same picture — Vernon Walters, US ambassador to the UN. Trevor McDonald of ITN news arrives — late — sweeps across the room, and takes up a seat in the centre front row. A woman sitting whispering into a phone in the corner of the room says that yes, London has a question and bustles over to McDonald with a microphone.

It is Friday, 5 February, two days after Congress narrowly voted against giving federal funds to the Contras. That night viewers of ITN news saw McDonald asking Walters whether it wasn't time that the US bowed to the wish of Congress. Walters replied: "We have to look at the situation and see if we are going to surrender to a marxist totalitarian dictatorship. That's what people in Europe don't realise."

Walters' satellite press conference came courtesy of Worldnet, a TV channel run by the US Information Agency to the tune of \$19 million a year. More than 40 US embassies and consulates in Europe are equipped to run "interactive" press conferences with US politicians and cultural leaders, broadcast once or twice a week. "Each embassy can propose topics or decide if we want to take part. Last week it was the ozone layer — we didn't join in; we didn't think anyone would be interested in that", says USIA press officer Jan Hartman cheerfully.

The project was launched in October 1983, a few days after the US invasion of Grenada. USIA director Charles Z. Wick reportedly returned from Europe saying "We're getting clobbered . . . Our best allies are really down on us about Grenada. We've got to do something fast to get our message across". Eight days later Jeane Kirkpatrick and two pro-invasion Caribbean leaders from St Lucia and Barbados held a satellite news conference with journalists in five European capitals. The two-hour exchange made headlines worldwide and excerpts appeared on TV news programmes throughout Europe.

Worldnet has since burgeoned into a complete government-run cable TV service, beaming a morning news and chat show, films, nature and science programmes, arts and English language teaching programmes to countries in Europe, North America and Latin America. By 1990 it will extend into the Middle East, the Far East and Africa and the number of viewers in each country is expected to increase dramatically as more people subscribe to cable TV.

For cable TV network operators it is a dream: slick and sophisticated, absolutely free and no adverts which may offend local regulations or sensibilities. And while the Worldnet logo is clearly displayed on the backdrop, many operators don't inform viewers that this is a US government-run broadcast, specifically designed to explain US foreign policy (the bombing of Libya, for example) and the American way of life.

Wick has now set his sights on direct broadcasting from satellites into people's homes. Voice of America, the US radio station, is already broadcasting instructions into the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe about how to build satellite receiver dishes; somewhat in vain, given their conspicuous size. New technology, he hopes, will shrink them into unobtrusiveness. Wick told the

New York Times that Worldnet would speed "the crumbling of the Soviet empire".

In the 5 February press conference meanwhile, Walters peevishly insisted "really, I came on this programme to talk about human rights in Cuba". Undeterred by Walters' ticking off, McDonald tried to press him on the question of aid to the Contras. But the very format of this "international televised exchange of ideas", as Worldnet calls it, militates against the possibility of pinning a politician down on any one issue: questions have to be booked in advance and as soon as a question has been asked in London, the "presenter" turns to Madrid or The Hague. "Isn't new technology wonderful? You can instantly spread bad feeling across the world", whispered a reporter on my right as he shut his notebook.

Jane Dibblin

If the caption fits

No 54



Now that Tony Benn isn't going to directly attack Our Neil for the leadership but continue merely with "a war of words" (*Daily Mail*) or "carping criticism" (*Daily Mirror*), we wondered what you thought that most emollient of men was whispering in his ear. Entries to be in by Monday 22 February. Ten-pound book token for the winner.

No 52: winner



Patient: "Tell me the truth, nurse, what makes you think Watford can draw at Liverpool?" (*Chas Garvey Peacehaven*)

Runners up: Nurse: "... or you could have the omelette at £2.50 followed by the hip replacement at £1728.28." (*G.M. Hayward, Edware*); Nurse: "And you'll be time sharing your bed with Mr Smith . . ." (*M. Gallacher, Whitechurch*); Patient: "Surely the water jug and the vase for my flowers should be included in the cover charge?" (*Stephen Engelhard, London*).

The finer points of RoboCop

"FUCKING HELL, his face has melted!" exclaims a pustular youth of about 14. "S'not as good as that bloke getting his head sliced open in *Terminator*," jeers his mate in the seat next door. "Shut the fuck up!" snaps another member of the gang. "I want to see him go splat on the car windscreen. That's the best bit."

Audience reaction to *RoboCop*, the thinking person's shlock movie, is a shade basic in this North London cinema tonight. The first youth, for example, seems to have missed the social comment implicit in the fact that the bloke with a melting face has just nose-dived through a vat of toxic waste. The trenchant irony of a futuristic security firm hiring the local crime syndicate to destroy its own robotic creation has likewise eluded him. He is waiting for the next gut-churning special effect. His hot dog is getting cold.

It's the movie's own fault. Political satire does tend to get lost in a welter of splattering offal, screaming tyres and exploding buildings if you chose the *Mad Max* sf genre. The teenagers who generously keep the cinemas open for everyone else these days are not there for a radical critique of post-industrial society, thank you very much. They want their troubled minds blown, and who can blame them.

"Give us one of yer Butterkist," demands the

first youth, as beaming TV anchorpersons up on the big screen announce that South Africa is threatening to use its neutron bomb. "Buy your own, dickhead," is the reply as an on-screen news item reports that the SDI "peace platform" orbiting the earth has just accidentally zapped Florida with a laser beam (multiple deaths, including several ex-presidents of the USA). The plot thickens. In the Detroit of the near future, the crumbling police service has just been privatised. There are rumblings of a strike.

The OCP security corporation which now runs things decides to head off any trouble with a flashy high-tech solution. Enter RoboCop — part Frankenstein's monster, part Superman. He has been welded together from scrap metal, microchips and the twitching remnants of a gunned-down cop called Murphy. RoboCop lives on baby food.

"How does he crap?" wonders the boy with the bucket of Butterkist. It's a good question, which never gets answered. Superheroes do not crap. They do lose their temper and throw cackling crims through plate-glass windows a lot, though.

"Does he have to kill *everyone* he meets?" whispers an elderly woman squirming in her end-of-row seat. "Why doesn't he take anyone alive?" A hideous crunching noise fills the auditorium as up on the screen a metal hand closes on another human throat. "I told you you wouldn't like it," says the woman's husband testily. "Put your hands over your eyes if it upsets you."

The boys at the front are made of sterner stuff. They are laughing like drains and punching each other in the shoulder. "Good film, innit?" snorts one.

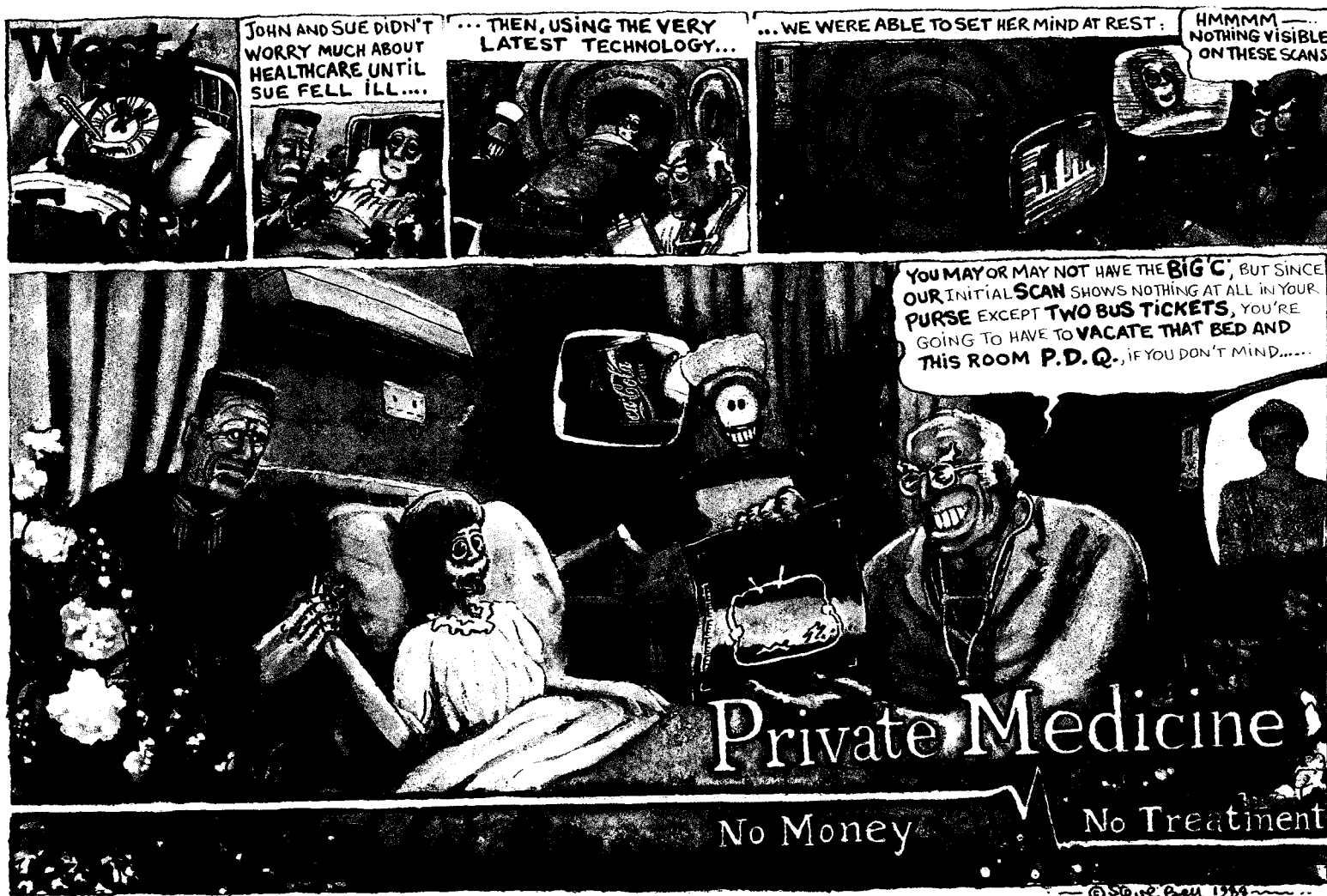
Jostling each other out through the exit as the credits roll, the boys give their final verdict. "Not bad," says the one with the hot dog, "but I don't like it as much as *Predator*. Too much talking and boring stuff. I'll get it as a video for my brother. He's eight." The popcorn kid wants a *RoboCop* tee-shirt.

Does anyone know where they sell them? Another good question. Creating a savage indictment of rampant Reaganomics and the international military-industrial complex is all very well. But you've got to get your merchandising right. *RoboCop* dolls for Christmas, *RoboCop* duvet covers, *RoboCop* pencil cases for school? As the top man at the OCP corporation put it, "Good business is where you find it."

Helen Chappell

1968 supplement

Copies of our 1968 supplement (published Christmas 1987) are available at 75p for individual copies and 50p each for bulk orders (20 or more). Orders with remittance to NS office. Please mark envelope "1968 supplement".



Bang to rights

"WE'VE BEEN telling you for years. Why did it take a British police officer to be hounded from his job to persuade you that the RUC are shooting us dead?" Reaction to the Stalker revelations in Northern Ireland has been angriest from people who for a long time have been trying to tell the outside world about the RUC and British Army transgressions, and finding their appeals falling on deaf ears.

For people in Northern Ireland the six killings which prompted John Stalker's investigation (see pages 10-12) were just some of the 150 and more security force killings since 1970. They include the killing of eight people (including four children) by plastic bullets in a twelve-month period from April 1981. Trials, inquests and inquiries into the 150 deaths have come and gone; one member of the security forces is currently serving a sentence for unlawful killing while on duty.

Stalker's revelations are another nail in the coffin of police credibility in Northern Ireland. The "Enniskillen effect" against the IRA has been considerably weakened, even in those pockets of opinion where it had taken hold. Stalker himself has said the suppression of his report has merely "put off the day of reckoning". Sooner or later, he said, other such incidents would happen and an inquiry would be called for. His advice on Irish radio to any British police officer who should be asked to head such an inquiry into the RUC is, "Go sick".

The law on security force killings is that if an officer believes he is in danger he is entitled to use force. He does not have to actually be in danger. He merely has to persuade the court that he thought at the time he was in danger. In the context of Northern Ireland such a perceived danger is arguably omnipresent, thereby conferring justification on practically any security force killing at any time.

The rows over the Birmingham Six appeal and Stalker are unlikely to spell the end of the Anglo-Irish agreement. For Britain the agreement is valuable, both in security and international propaganda terms. The Irish government knows that about 60 per cent of the electorate approves of it. The agreement serves a purpose for both in keeping the lid on the conflict in Northern Ireland and marginally reducing the influence of Sinn Féin.

But Charles Haughey, the Irish premier, is two weeks away from his party's annual conference. John Stalker's transparently honest performance on Irish television (and the resultant patient queues of respectable Dubliners lining up to buy signed copies of his book), coupled with public anger at the Birmingham Six appeal verdict, mean he will have to respond in some way to Britain's expected snub. But he won't want to go too far.

In all the legal and political ramifications of the "shoot to kill" controversy, sight of the families themselves can be lost. A small group of these visited Dublin last week to ask the Irish prime minister, Charles Haughey, to insist that he "get justice from Britain". Gervaise McKerr's wife said her "heart was breaking in two". She is one of very many.

Anne Cadwallader

POLITICAL SKETCH

Bring back the old liturgy

Edward Pearce

THERE IS something about conflicts involving Norman Fowler and Michael Meacher which makes the heart curl at the edges. This is no snobbish objection to two of the most painful cases of Greater London Adenoids on the market, it is the attitudes they express and the style to which they adapt, which induce instant depression. Both are parodists. Meacher is a virtuoso of low calibre indignation, not at the concert level, not a Horowitz of the Conscience like Roy Hattersley on a grim day, but a sort of sullen hurdy-gurdy man turning the same handle for his three basic tunes. Fowler is the model of Tory primness. He has done his homework and made a fair copy for teacher; if he crosses the road he looks both ways; he is kind to animals, his ears are clean, you could strangle him.

On the topic of the Ford strike, that extraordinary reversion to the old class-battling British norm, both clung grimly to type. Fowler righteously tells us that this dispute is a matter for the management, the unions and the like. Ian Gow, nature's answer to the ten-syllable-a-minute, Ministry of Defence android, Ian MacDonald, enquires pipingly of the Speaker if ministers may be asked questions from which they have no responsibility. Even Fowler cringes.

Not often these days do I warm to Eric the Carpenter whose Evangelist-under-sedation style can be very trying, but he had a point. "You said you wanted ballots," in his reasonable-man-in-pub voice. "The workers 'ave 'ad a ballot; they've 'ad two ballots. You can't say it was the trade union bureaucrats calling the strike." All of which is fine and unanswerable, though we could have done without the Apostle Eric throwing in a private benediction, "I personally support the workers in their struggle".

Mr Fowler's way with muttering dissent is one of lip-curling self-content. "The government," he pronounced solemnly, "has no responsibility." One has heard of dialogues of the deaf, this was a colloquy of people who had learned their lines and wanted to repeat them in front of company. I'm all for bringing back the old liturgy but this is ridiculous.

Nothing is at all ridiculous about the issue of alleged Nazi war criminals in Britain and what to do about them. This was incisor time and they were stripping down the canines all round the chamber. Into what should have been a commonsense practical matter, handled with sane deliberation by Douglas Hurd and responded to in the same good spirit by Roy Hattersley, intruded Ivor Stanbrook and Anthony Marlow. It is the way with angular right-wing lawyers to stress the letter and not the

spirit of their trade. So no one was greatly shocked by words about "trying foreigners for crimes allegedly committed in foreign countries". That is the par-for-the-course legalistic cop-out. The fact that genocide may have altered cases and that some crimes are so terrible that if the frozen pipes of jurisdiction law obstruct justice it may take a blow torch to unfreeze them has no appeal to Mr Stanbrook.

But that is by the way. What truly left a nasty taste was his account of the Jewish lobby as one "whose main motive is hatred and revenge". Oh dear. Has Mr Stanbrook made the journey which everyone should make; has he stood under the wrought-iron welcome on the gate and looked at the children's shoes in glass cases, and the fingernail scratches in cement on the ceiling of the gas chamber? If he hasn't, he should. If he has, I don't understand him.

As much goes for Tony Marlow, bringing in the killings of Arab boys by Israeli soldiers. The willingness of legislators to abandon logic and validate great evils by citing other, unrelated evils is melancholy to observe.

Not that Mr Janner for the Jewish lobby really helps his case. Shrill and vehement, he spoils a case much better put quietly. However, I never expected to cheer Toby Jessel, who on most issues is a huzzahing backbench loyalist and as near as we shall get in this world to a Jewish Bingo Little. However, his reproach to Honourable Friends who in the best *Morning Star* style had been going on about "witch hunts", was commendable. "Whatever the original witches may or may not have done," said Jessel quietly, "they didn't help to murder six million people."

The Home Secretary continues, when decently left to himself, on the course of scrupulous and sensitive handling of his responsibilities. We could have had an evasion, a duck-out, based on time-lapse and technical problems. Instead, if at all possible, the spirit of the law looks likely to be pursued. A strong commission to examine all the international evidence, the question of jurisdiction and amending legislation to assert that jurisdiction being left open, is a better package than most would have expected. At the same time, we won't extradite anyone to the Soviet Union.

Mr Hurd didn't spell out his reasons for this, but they aren't hard to guess at, and surely go beyond the absence of an extradition treaty. First, this Home Secretary is not inclined to extradite the worst of men back to execution, something which no consistent opponent of capital punishment can object to. Second, the Soviet Union has quite enough dried blood under official fingernails to make it ill-cast for any avenging role.

One listened to Mr Hurd, one listened to Roy Hattersley and to Merlyn Rees, and was glad for once at the existence of the establishment. The alternatives were either barbarous or, in the case of Dr Owen, hopelessly off the ball. Owen launched a great thing about Waldheim. Now Waldheim, liar, accomplice in God knows what, and holder of the Silver medal of King Zvonimir for unknown services during a Serb-massacring expedition, is not living in Edinburgh but in Vienna. No British jurisdiction is *that* elastic. As Dennis Skinner remarked uncharitably, "It's a good populist line." The establishment didn't have all the best tunes! □

Epitaph to the rule of law

There was no "shoot to kill" policy in Northern Ireland, says John Stalker. But the circumstances of the six killings which led to his inquiry pointed "to a police inclination, if not a policy, to shoot suspects dead without warning rather than to arrest them".

DUNCAN CAMPBELL reviews
Stalker's autobiography and finds a British state utterly indifferent to the rule of law

TO DATE, in the mainland of the United Kingdom, there has been no risk that enemies of the state may suddenly "disappear", later to be found dead in ditches or rivers. In the course of the last 25 years, there is only one corpse over whose remains hangs a serious question mark — Special Branch informer Geoff Lennon, found dead in the Surrey countryside in 1972 after a hasty last-minute visit to the National Council for Civil Liberties. (I exclude the more recent death of Hilda Murrell, for which there is no plausible evidence for anything beyond the work of a psychopath.)

In Northern Ireland, it has been a little different. The Mobile Reaction Force of the early seventies, and individual SAS officers in the mid-seventies, on occasion evidently took the law into their own hands in despatching IRA suspects. The killings in the Stalker affair go beyond this, however, not because of a new policy of pre-emptive killing, but because of the lengths to which powerful police chiefs and their abettors have been able to go in obstructing a major and publicly important murder inquiry, and rendering void all of its conclusions.

Finally, last month, Attorney-General Patrick Mayhew officially sanctioned four years of fabricated evidence, cover-up, obstruction and delay in investigating the six killings because of "considerations of national security". The killers remain free, and in uniform.

Noting his "deepest anxiety", Mayhew told the Commons that "I have had to balance one harm to national security against another". In consequence, he also banned charges of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, for which more than ample evidence was admitted to exist.

Not only do we now have at least *ex post facto* authority for state killings, but the very issue at the heart of the matter — the meaning of "national security" — has no precision or definition at all. Mrs Thatcher said as much in the Commons two weeks ago:

The term is generally understood to refer to the safeguarding of the state and the community against threats to their survival or well-being. I am not aware that any previous administration has thought it appropriate to adopt a specific definition of the term.

In other words, "don't ask us, the other lot didn't know either". But even if killing or the denial of justice were ever in accordance with the rule of law, the extraordinary imprecision of the government's loose definition of national security in relation to the system of law can clearly open the door to arbitrary and extraordinary state violence in the future.

Official lawbreaking

The door to the authorised commission of other illegal acts by the state has already been prised wide open. For a long time the Security Service (MI5) has systematically broken the law, bugging, bullying and blackmailing for information. Challenged as to the dangers of this policy, the service's legal adviser, Bernard Sheldon, has told new recruits that there was no need to put intelligence officers' activities on a regulated, lawful basis. They had always got away with crime, and always would.

Former Home Office and Northern Ireland Secretary Merlyn Rees recently became the first former cabinet minister openly to acknowledge this policy of official lawbreaking. Asked by the BBC last September how Home Secretaries were "being asked to break the law", Rees said:

It was quite clear that the methods that were used were a matter for them and I understand quite clearly that there was no legal backing.

Rees added that the Home Secretary is responsible for MI5, "MI5 are not covered in law. They don't exist and many of the things that they have to do, a break-in for example, is illegal. . . ." He added that, since "the Home Secretary depends on them to do this", he is "acquiescing in

the breaking of the law".

In the Appeal Court last month, Sir John Donaldson also suggested that MI5 have a Crown licence to break the law. "The security service is bound by a strict rule of law," he said, but the press should "always bear in mind a prerogative power [of the government] not to pursue criminal proceedings." That is, to let MI5 get away with it. Such lawbreaking was, in his view, "essential in the public interest". Only acts of murder, he noted, might be a possible exception. That exception seems to have lasted a mere handful of days. The consequence was, as Robert Kee observed on BBC2's *Seven Days* a few days later, killing in the interests of the state. But what had Nuremberg been about, asked Kee, adding: "What on earth did we fight the second world war for?"

The "hayshed" tape

John Stalker said last week that he had found no "formal" shoot-to-kill policy. But the killings which prompted his inquiry did leave a suspicion of "deliberate assassination" — and, indeed, raised the possibility that they might have been revenge killings. The IRA had killed three RUC officers in a land-mine explosion in the same area, just a few weeks before. Stalker's team discovered links between two of the fatal incidents and the murders of the policemen.

The RUC adopted a variety of implausible and unpleasant tactics to hamper the inquiry from getting to the evidence they needed; and Chief Constable Sir John Hermon's obstructive efforts spill across page after page of *Stalker**, matched later on by the "despised" behaviour towards Stalker of Manchester Chief Constable James



James Anderton (left) told Stalker (right) that he expected a knighthood — an honour which the Queen (centre) never quite conferred on him



Pacemaker Press

The hayshed in which Michael Tighe was killed and Martin McCauley was wounded

Anderton, Stalker's boss.

The central artefact of the inquiry was the secret "hayshed" tape, which had recorded the events around the shooting of two youths, Michael Tighe and Martin McCauley. The hayshed, near Lurgan, had been secretly bugged by MI5. The tape was evidence of how the RUC had shot the two unarmed men, killing one and seriously wounding the other. Stalker was not informed about the tape, and it was withheld from him at all costs, until the very day that he was suddenly removed on the inquiry.

At first, Hermon said that MI5 would not release the tape. But MI5 made it clear that they were happy for Stalker to get the tape. Then Hermon told him that the tape didn't exist, only a transcript. Hermon's final manoeuvre to prevent Stalker getting the tape was to assert that he would only permit it if a cabinet minister signed a certificate that it was in the national interest. The Northern Ireland DPP, Sir Barry Shaw, forwarded this request to London; and in return was advised that a certificate to this effect was signed by the then Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers.

On Monday, 2 June 1986, Stalker was due to go to Belfast to get the transcript. The certificate had been sent to Northern Ireland a day before. On that day, he was taken off the inquiry, and put under investigation himself.

Cover-ups made easy

The evidence, he had found, on which RUC officers had been acquitted of murder charges against the four men was flimsy and inadequate; a third-rate investigation at best, intended only for a coroner's court. The investigation of the

shootings was a "catalogue of ineptitude". He found that the RUC Special Branch was unaccountable to other parts of the RUC, and that cover-ups were made easy by the chilling practice of holding a "Chinese Parliament" after each difficult-to-explain death. There, false stories were agreed. Everybody shared in the cover-up decision but no one was actually responsible for it:

The Special Branch targetted the suspected terrorists, they briefed the officers, and after the shootings they removed the men, cars and guns for a private debriefing before the CID officers were allowed any access to these crucial matters.

Lying to the press came easily to many of the senior RUC officers whom Stalker interviewed in his inquiry. But he was clearly distressed to find that they went on to tell the same lies to the CID of the RUC.

Special Branch officers "planned, directed and controlled the official accounts" of the shooting incidents. According to *Stalker*, a false version of the Official Secrets Act was frequently used by Special Branch officers, who made their junior colleagues sign special forms. They were then informed that, having signed the forms, it would be against the Official Secrets Act not to tell the agreed lies. But the Official Secrets Act provides no such discretion to lie. And the judge hearing the murder trials found police accounts "tainted with lies".

The Detective Constable who had monitored the tape recording as it was made told Stalker and his men he was not allowed to tell him anything. If saying nothing — and so obstructing the police in their inquiries — was a criminal offence, said the constable, then "he was acting only on instructions".

The abiding mystery of the Stalker affair is how and why senior police officers arranged his abrupt dismissal, if indeed they did. Stalker says he thinks it may have been agreed by the cabinet. There is some evidence that this is unlikely, notably the facts that authority in the name of the cabinet for his access to the hayshed tapes was granted, and indeed triggered his abrupt removal.

For once, MI5 and their chief legal adviser, Bernard Sheldon, have kept their noses clean. Although MI5 were happy to let Stalker have the tape, they clearly implied that the way they had planted the bug might not have been legal. They were "very reluctant to discuss the authority for use and installation of the [bugging] device in the hayshed". So Stalker agreed simply to record that their assurances that the way the bugging had been done was "politically and legally in order".

There is evidence of a special community of interest between James Anderton and Sir John Hermon. Anderton had told Stalker that he expected to be knighted in 1987. He wasn't — his pronouncements about his hot line to heaven eventually denied him these worldly goods, even after he had spent a year as the President of ACPO, the Association of Chief Police Officers. But Anderton had more than once mentioned to Stalker that he could gain an obligatory knighthood by moving to take over the RUC when Hermon left.

Yet through much of the investigation he used Anderton as his father confessor. During a conversation about police anti-terrorist tactics, Anderton commented, "It is impossible to make an omelette without breaking eggs".

Portraits emerge of the key *dramatis personae* in the affair. Hermon himself, of course; Sir Philip Myers, the Inspector of Constabulary, who originally appointed Stalker, but who emerges as a weak man, shifting tack with changing winds; and above all Anderton himself. Stalker records how Anderton talked about having seen the holy finger write a speech on his breakfast table for him, just before he went to make his notorious remarks about homosexuals and others "swirling around in a cesspit of their own making". It didn't matter what anyone thought of what he said, explained Chief Constable Anderton. He had been put in office not by the Home Secretary, but by God. "I am an instrument of the Lord. I have no choice in these matters."

Stalker is a disgusting story of the abuse of executive power. While John Stalker did not end up dead in a ditch, and will not, the nightmare of his life after he became the target of a security agency conspiracy bears immediate comparison with Costa-Gavras's *Z*.

Stalker is probably the most honest account of life in the British police, at the top, ever published. It surpasses by a mile Sir Robert Mark's niggling admissions of rotten apples in certain barrels, or John Alderson's glitzy liberalist campaigns. The policing world which Stalker describes is populated by bullying and irresponsible tyrants, half-demented visionary lunatics, and ineffectual civil servants. It is sleazy and corrupt, and corrupting, on a par with banana dictatorships everywhere. It is thus appropriate that Stalker be the chronicler of how this sleazy British society has become officially indifferent to *prima facie* evidence that killing in the streets has been licensed in the name of the security of the state. □

**Stalker* was published on Monday by Harrap, £12.95

Who believes in British justice?

Disquieting evidence about the six killings in Northern Ireland which led to the Stalker inquiry continues to leak out. ANNE CADWALLADER reports

FORENSIC and eye-witness evidence against four RUC officers, acquitted on charges of murder by the Northern Ireland courts, have been suppressed by the Special Branch and police there and never brought to court.

For legal reasons relating to the Official Secrets Act, John Stalker does not reveal the evidence in *Stalker* (Harrap, £12.95) but vital information is contained in the Stalker/Sampson report on the alleged "shoot to kill" policy of the RUC which the British government refuses to publish. Some of this information has been leaked to the press and television in Ireland — especially the RTE (Irish TV) current affairs programme *Today, Tonight*. This information has combined with other evidence already on the public record and revelations in *Stalker* to intensify concern about the quality of the prosecution cases in the two murder trials which followed the killings and has contributed greatly to the hostile and sceptical response in Ireland to the British government's decision not to prosecute any RUC officers for seeking to pervert the course of justice.

The evidence ranges from the most basic and commonsense detective work to highly sophisticated material obtained by the independent police investigators working under Stalker's direction.

According to Stalker himself, the prosecution papers presented to him in the cases of the six men killed in late 1982 were "poorly prepared and presented". The files were "little more than a collection of statements". They "bore no resemblance to my idea of a murder prosecution" and were more like a "coroner's inquiry". "Even on the most cursory of readings," he says, "I could see clearly why the prosecutions had failed."

In what he describes as a catalogue of ineptitude (and most Irish observers believe he is being kind), bullets, cartridge cases and other vital forensic evidence were removed from the scenes of the killings, vital eye (and ear) witnesses were never interviewed and "shockingly low standards" of basic techniques led to grossly inadequate prosecutions being presented in court, leading inevitably to acquittals.

Catalogue of ineptitude

To give a few examples — first from the killing of Gervaise McKerr, Sean Burns and Eugene Toman on 11 November 1982. The Special Branch interfered with the evidence and cars and weapons were removed from the scene. At least 20 bullet cases were missing, for which the police had an explanation: a priest, tending the dead, had removed them in the folds of his vestments.

(Stalker wasn't convinced.) Fragments of a bullet lodged in the car's steering wheel — vital forensic evidence, for it was probably the bullet which killed Sean Burns — were found there by Stalker's team, months after the trial for murder of RUC officers and years after the shooting. The car in which the three had died still had bullets under it at the barracks where it was being kept.

Stalker's inquiry found that the police had lied about a routine police check, at which the three men's car was said to have been asked to stop. In fact, the three men had been under surveillance for many hours and there had been a spectacular car chase over more than 500 yards during which the police fired 108 rounds of ammunition at the car. (This week a BBC Northern Ireland news story added a detail not known to Stalker: the car was actually bugged and the RUC were listening in to the three men's conversations.)

‘Vital forensic evidence was removed from the scenes of the killings, vital witnesses were never interviewed...’

After the car crashed, Toman's body was found lying outside. From the beginning that raised an obvious question — how did his body come to be outside the car if he had been shot dead while it was still moving? Three RUC officers were eventually charged with his murder. The police explanation in court was that Toman's dead weight had fallen onto the inside car door handle, pushing it down and opening the door. Toman's body had fallen through the open door onto the ground. Stalker found that the Ford Escort door handle in this model was a small plastic lever which was pulled not downwards, but out of a moulded niche towards the passenger. This crucial, and utterly basic, piece of information was not given in evidence in court.

Moreover, vital eye (or ear) witnesses were not interviewed. One man, a responsible civil servant who wanted to remain anonymous, says that he heard a volley of shots, and then silence. He walked down to the roadside, about 90 yards away, when he came upon a policeman who questioned, and then body-searched him. He returned to his home when he heard another four or five shots. Both the man and his wife agree that the length of time between the two volleys of shots was at least two minutes. I have myself talked to another potential witness who confirms that there were two separate volleys.

Finally, Toman was still alive when the car crashed. He was killed by a single shot, fired through the heart from behind.

Lord Justice Gibson acquitted the RUC officers

and praised them for their "commendable courage and determination" and for "bringing the three deceased to justice, in this case the final court of justice". Gibson's dictum is widely treasured in Ireland for encapsulating so neatly the quality of British justice.

In the case of the killings of Seamus Grew and Roddy Carroll on 12 December 1982, a vital police witness in the case was not merely not called to give evidence in the trial of the accused police constable (a former British soldier John Robinson, trained to use "maximum fire power" to remove danger), but was not even mentioned in the accused officer's evidence. This invisible witness was a police inspector — the senior officer present — who was driving the police car involved and giving the orders. When his presence was finally acknowledged in court, Mr Justice McDermott reassured the public that he had been kept out of the proceedings for "entirely proper reasons".

Stalker concludes that Carroll was killed instantaneously; Robinson fired 15 shots through the car's passenger door from six to ten feet away (the judge praised Robinson for his marksmanship). Having shot Carroll dead, Robinson then walked round to the other side of the car, through the light of the car's headlights, re-loaded and shot Grew dead from close range as he tried to get out of the vehicle. In court, the police constable explained that he thought that he had been shot at and that his own life was in danger. (The two men were in fact unarmed.) The judge accepted Robinson's account and acquitted him.

Murder in a hayshed

No RUC officer has been charged with murder following the killing of 17-year-old Michael Tighe in a hayshed — yet this case, more than the other two, has caused huge public indignation and disquiet. Michael Tighe had no terrorist connections, and a cobbled-together RUC file to implicate him in Republican activity was discredited when it was found to carry a date after Tighe had been killed.

Far from simply "happening across" Tighe and his companion, Michael McCauley, in the hayshed while on a routine patrol, the evidence is that the RUC had bugged the hayshed for several weeks in the autumn of 1982 with a defective listening device; as a result explosives used to kill three policemen in October 1982 were delivered and removed from the barn without the police knowing. The hayshed was then put under surveillance by a more sophisticated device. Stalker strongly suspected that a highly-paid informer might have acted as an *agent provocateur*. The evidence is certainly that the two boys stumbled into a staked-out ambush. Moreover, the entry and exit wounds in Tighe's body did not correspond with the RUC's account that he was shot confronting them with an old (ammunition-free) gun. Stalker still believes that the tape which he was denied contains the evidence which would determine what really happened.

This, then, is the background against which the statement by Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney General, deciding against any prosecutions of RUC officers in the light of the Stalker/Sampson report, is judged in Ireland — south and north of the border. Central to Mayhew's statement was the fact that four RUC officers had been charged with murder and acquitted; and thus that there had been no murders to cover up. Very few people in Ireland share the Attorney General's confidence that those cases were properly heard. □

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ALTHOUGH I have often advertised my availability, I have never been called upon by the Labour Party to serve on its national executive. Last week's meeting between the NEC and the shadow cabinet is the nearest I have approached to membership of the Parliament of Labour.

My immediate proposal for reform of the national executive is that we invite the press gallery to come in from the cold on their picket line and listen in at the back of the hall. If there are to be press reports on the *News at Ten* of the day's proceedings, they may as well be at first hand rather than derivative. This would save innocent victims of present arrangements — such as myself — from the task of explaining what we really said.

The political context of our current discussion is this. Two distinct threads twine together to form the core of Thatcherism. The first is a powerful distrust of civil liberties and individual freedom, which has prompted an alarming expansion of the coercive and repressive powers of the state. The other face of Thatcherism is its open hostility to the economic and social role of the state.

There is no contradiction between these apparently opposite impulses of Thatcherism. If you are serious about liberating market forces, you must also truss up the victims who will otherwise upset the grand design by protesting. The authoritarian streak of Thatcherism is a necessary response to the stubborn refusal of humanity to live willingly with the consequences of market allocation in the raw. There is a delightful, but sadly apocryphal, tale from a Bilderberg conference in the seventies at which Nigel Lawson was asked what he meant by warning that Great Britain did not have the

CONSUMER SOCIALISM

All the piggies in the market



ROBIN COOK (above) dismantles the myths of the free market — including some believed by the left

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technical means to introduce monetarism and replied, "Water cannons".

The document presented to last week's joint meeting makes a powerful case against the authoritarianism which forms the dark side of Thatcherism and confidently sets out Labour's stall as the champion of liberty. The long tradition in socialism of distrust of the state as a real potential agent of repression is given full voice. My comments arose from a hankering for an equally bold challenge to the neo-liberalism of Thatcherite market economies. The makings of such a challenge are to be found in the document, but they need highlighting.

Lyrical humbug

Fortunately the material for such a challenge is to hand in profusion. In the first place, much of the market rhetoric is pure humbug. Some evocations of the market achieve an almost lyrical quality in which it stands revealed as a thing of terrible beauty and awesome symmetry, and no myth has proved more persistent than the belief in a lost Golden Age in which true competition existed. It probably never did exist and even Adam Smith was obliged to note that the businessmen of his day only met to conspire against the public.

It most certainly does not exist today in the age

of conglomerates and the mega-corporations. The march of corporate power has continued untroubled by the impossibility of maintaining a market while the players get steadily fewer but bigger. Ironically when Thatcherism deregulated the City — the nearest vestigial example of a market — the result was to wipe out the British players on the Stock Market and when the current shake-out of surplus capacity is finished we will find the City firmly in the hands of the largest American and Japanese banks.

Mrs Thatcher has sought to summon up by sheer force of rhetoric the individual, aggressive entrepreneurs whom she needs to fit her outmoded economic notions. Hence one of her early and most treasured *bon mots*, that she intended "to Lakerise the whole economy". Sadly the airline giants proved capable of surviving longer than Freddie Laker, and the government that began by backing him has ended by blessing the merger of British Airways and British Caledonian.

A pertinent illustration of the gulf between market rhetoric and market reality is supplied by the current drive to enforce "competitive tendering" throughout the public sector. Despite the apparent profusion of private companies bidding for contracts, the great majority of all cleansing firms are wholly owned subsidiaries of

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Who guards the *Guardian*?

Is the Guardian going yuppie?

JOLYON JENKINS looks at the changes in style — and heart? — at a newspaper under challenge from the centre and the right

THE *GUARDIAN*'s public relations manager, Caroline Audemars, sent the *New Statesman* a card the other day, inviting us to breakfast with her editor, Peter Preston, on Friday at the Opera Terrace Cafe, Covent Garden, so we can "find out all about the new *Guardian*".

The "new" *Guardian* is an expensive revamp by London's trendiest design house, Pentagram (who are also working on a redesign for the *NS*). By Friday, you can judge it for yourself, but for Thursday's readers we can reveal, thanks to Preston, that the paper has a new masthead, two new typefaces — one for news, another for features, and a "modular" layout (so that stories are laid out in squares and rectangles rather than long columns). The paper will be in two sections, the second half being based on the special supplements (Media on Monday, Education on Tuesday and so on). It all has a modern, spacey, magazine-like feel to it. All this and breakfast in Covent Garden with the editor. Is the *Guardian* going yuppie?

"I don't think so," says Preston. "What we are doing here is essentially, whether people believe it or not — and frankly because of the climate of the world out there I wouldn't necessarily if I was sitting in your place buy it, though it happens to be true — is an internalised process."

His point is that for many years the paper has laboured under horrendous technical difficulties which have finally been lifted: the paper was typeset partly in London (until quite recently on hot metal), partly in Manchester, and some of it was printed in a basement in the old *Times* building in Grays Inn Road, which started to fall apart after the move to Wapping. Now all the typesetting is computerised and the paper has a new printing plant on the Isle of Dogs. It is a propitious time to carry out all the changes that, but for the technology, would have been made long ago.

The word "relaunch", with its connotations of failure, is frowned on at Farringdon Road. But, says Preston, "you may call it *whatever* you wish and I'm sure you will. I was told a fortnight ago that the *New Statesman* was very busy preparing a hatchet piece on the sell-out relaunch *Guardian*, which would put on all the screws. Not that I mind that."

This isn't a hatchet piece; but the "new *Guardian*" story isn't simply one of inexorable progress through the miracles of space-age technology. In the last year, the *Guardian* has lost 9.2 per cent of its readers: circulation dropped from 506,886 in July-December 1986, to 460,340 in the same period last year. At the same time, the *Independent* increased its circulation by 19.3 per cent, to 360,887. Not all of the *Independent*'s readers have come from the *Guardian* — quite a lot

have come from *The Times* and some are "trading up" from the *Express* and *Mail*. But there has been a significant defection, particularly in the south east and among the young (the under-25s).

The *Independent* has succeeded in halting the *Guardian*'s ten-year rise during which (and under Preston's editorship) circulation had roughly doubled. (In a sense, what is even more worrying for the *Guardian* is the fact that the quality paper which is increasing its young readers the fastest is the *Telegraph*.) It's clear that the liberal ethos which once made the *Guardian* the most fashionable paper no longer appeals to the young. Now the *Independent* is the paper to be seen with, even if, as Preston claims, the *Guardian*'s market research shows it isn't actually read that much.

"The *Independent* is the SDP of newspapers," says one *Guardian* writer, making the point that a new paper, like a new party, can be all things to all people — but only for a while. The *Guardian* is perhaps like the Labour Party, stuck with a formula which no longer seems in tune with the changed world. The question is whether the paper, like the party, can change the public's perception of it without selling out on its traditional concerns — poverty, social justice, the third world, the peace movement.

Disguised consumerism

Part of the *Independent*'s success has come from its disguised middle-class consumerism, a style perhaps consciously derived from the *Sunday Times* of Harold Evans (and one which uses many of Evans's own writers too). It often tackles the social agenda from the viewpoint of its readers' lives rather than through the frame of an ideology. It is the "lifestyle-orientated" coverage, which is really code for class coverage, which seems to be an ingredient of the winning formula.

It was thoughts like these which prompted the *Guardian* to hold a weekend "summit" meeting of heads of departments at a hotel in Egham shortly after the election — a "taking stock", according to Preston. Two months later, Preston held, at very short notice, a staff meeting, at which he outlined some of the Egham conclusions. According to one journalist who was there: "He said that we musn't write so much about pressure groups, but about the sort of lives readers of the *Guardian* lead. We weren't to have so many boring stories about worthy things."

Another journalist remembers: "For about two weeks after that, people kept talking about 'the spirit of Egham', but it was like trying to make a dinosaur waltz. The political difficulty about cutting out the pressure groups which see the paper as their natural home is that they are the ones through which the left operates."

Preston protests just slightly too much that he is not "selling out"; in an hour of conversation he talks of "new ideas" but not "left-wing". It is, he says, a matter of responding to changing times. For example: "We've been against the way privatisations have been carried out, but there's not much point in sitting there for another five

years saying privatisation is a bad thing which ought to be repealed, if the world has moved on."

He denies that there was any injunction to move away from pressure group coverage. "That's not true in any way that I am aware of. But any newspaper which seeks to have a general appeal ought always to be analysing the way news gets to it. For instance, there are quite small groups which make sure that we get all their discussion papers. You then meet them at parties and they say, 'Terrific coverage, you're doing a fine job'. But if you then step back and say 'wait a minute, how many people are there in this group, and how many people, apart from the three top dogs who

Grin-faced editor Peter Preston: "no sell out"



are constantly complimenting the editor on the tremendous service that is being provided, are there actually reading it?', you may come up with different answers.

"That doesn't mean that the *Guardian* is in any way changing, except that it obviously has, over the last ten years, constantly looked to make sure that it isn't the outlet for a number of well-targeted pressure groups."

Similarly, he rejects the word "lifestyle", but adds: "You have to bear in mind that your readers aren't static. For instance, 15 months ago, 8 per cent of *Guardian* readers had personal shareholdings. This year, that's gone to 22 per cent. We've now got roughly as many readers who have personal shareholdings as the *Financial Times* has. Now you can either say it is a dramatic sell-out and a 'yuppification' to pay any attention to that fact or you can say, 'Hang on, things are changing' and, without pulling back on some areas, we ought to be expanding and thinking about other areas."

Preston believes that it's possible for a newspaper to engage *directly* with the concerns of

"real people". He gives an example: "Almost the latest recruit we have out there is Clare Dyer, whose speciality is looking at the legal system as it impacts on ordinary people rather than more baroque causes." It's an interesting example, because when the position of legal correspondent fell vacant in the middle of last year, the paper initially decided not to appoint a replacement. It believed that the subject could better be covered by other specialists, such as James Erlichman, the consumer affairs correspondent — as if law was solely a matter of faulty toasters, rather than a series of interlocking systems, worthy of study in their own right. It also, crucially, ignores the problem of defining "ordinary people"; the legal concerns of the middle class are different from those of the working class.

Embourgeoisement?

One outcome of Egham was the appointment of Melanie Phillips as "policy editor". Phillips was the paper's extremely well-regarded social services correspondent during the late seventies and early eighties, who moved on to become news editor (and, incidentally, wrote the play *Traitors*). The promotion, by all accounts, was not a success, and it might be kinder to draw a veil over some of those remarks made by those who remember her reign. It's said that she was unenthusiastic about news areas dear to the traditional left, such as CND, and Labour local government, and positively enthusiastic about very little. She is ferociously intelligent, but perhaps lacks the human touch.

If anything signals the *embourgeoisement* of the paper it's Melanie Phillips's new promotion. As policy editor, her main function is to coordinate the specialist correspondents; and she writes her own column on Fridays. Says Preston: "One of the purposes behind Melanie's appointment was that if you are running a large paper with a lot of home specialists, you have to be careful that they talk to each other. I wanted to make sure that we were as receptive to new ideas as we could be: ie that we didn't get set in a whole variety of attitudes which were frankly not very relevant to what was going on. That's not selling out — 'he said, defending himself against the charges'."

So far, she has established her hegemony over the education page. Shortly after her appointment, she stunned some staff with a column in which she defended the Dewsbury parents — who had wanted to take their (mainly white) children away from a predominantly Asian school — and came clean that her own children went to private school. She also blamed some of the educational malaise on teachers' attitudes, which must have infuriated an important segment of the paper's readership. Her next target is thought to be the "Society Tomorrow" page.

Melanie Phillips is, say insiders, Preston's protégé, and possibly even the Dauphin — should Preston decide to fulfil his long-standing ambition and appoint himself Washington correspondent. The opposing faction is represented by the deputy editor, Peter Cole, an old-fashioned Labour man. Further down the hierarchy, Cole was responsible for the appointment of Paul Johnson (not the former *NS* editor) as news editor and Duncan Campbell (not the *NS* investigator) as deputy news editor.

Johnson, it's said, has the good news editor's virtue of enthusiasm. Campbell, former news editor of the London listings magazine *City Limits* and home affairs correspondent of the defunct

London Daily News, is a fine journalist whose "alternative" background gives him a more open perspective than most Fleet Street writers have.

Cole has an ally in Richard Gott, the features editor and — a recent appointment — associate editor. Gott is a former revolutionary marxist, who came up against the BBC-MI5 vetting system when he applied to become editor of the *Listener*. ("Digs with the wrong foot," said MI5.) His empire has expanded greatly over the years to include arts, books, women's pages, "Agenda", and "Third World Review". Now it is being split up. He will cease to edit Agenda: Monday's Agenda page will be edited by Martin Kettle, who was until very recently the political leader writer and edited Friday Agenda. There will now be no Agenda on Fridays. Kettle, a 1968 Oxford student revolutionary who went on to work for the NCCL, *New Society* and the *Sunday Times*, is a Labour Party supporter. He is also taking on responsibility for the page opposite the leader, which now goes under the title "Comment".

Gott has been criticised within the paper for being insufficiently Eurocentric and too interested in the third world. Third World Review, edited by Victoria Brittan, has itself been under threat during recent weeks. Its position is apparently now secure, though it seems likely to become a foreign rather than a features page. Gott is quite happy to be stepping back from his hands-on role to allow the sections a greater degree of autonomy. According to one journalist: "It's like an outbreak of nationalism in the Austro-Hungarian empire."

Another uses a less happy historical analogy. "It's like the French Resistance: you know who's behind you and who's in front, but you don't have any idea of the whole picture." The *Guardian*, so keen on governmental freedom of information, has very little internal *glasnost*. There's a widespread feeling that the paper doesn't involve its staff in key decisions and doesn't exploit the talents of its writers. The result is that, according to one writer, "there is less excitement than you can possibly imagine about the redesign."

The other criticism is that senior staff of the paper suffer from excessive cynicism. "There's a constant attempt to denigrate the motives of those involved in politics and pressure groups," says one journalist. "People who supported CND weren't allowed to cover it. Someone else would be sent along to write a knocking piece." The danger which some perceive is that the *Guardian*'s new "questioning" role will lead it into a *Spectator*-style sniping from the sidelines.

"The question is whether we can take ourselves sufficiently seriously to allow others to take us seriously," says one. "If the aim is to provide a broad intellectual base that is prepared to challenge assumptions, then there is a long way to go." The other danger is that an attempt to appeal to the concerns of the readers, together with a commitment to "radicalism", could degenerate into vulgar Owenism.

All this said, there is no real outward sign that the editorial line has shifted rightwards. On the contrary, the paper's leaders are probably more committed to the Labour Party (and not simply to Kinnock's version of the same) now than they were during the heyday of the SDP. Neither would it be a sensible editorial strategy: about half the paper's readers voted Labour in the election, and most of the rest voted for the Alliance. With the *Independent* apparently attaching itself to David Owen's coat tails, there is no reason why the *Guardian* shouldn't continue to annexe the entire liberal-left ground.



Keith McMillan/Campaign

Will Kenneth Baker get his revenge?

The Thatcher government has no mandate to break up London's education service writes

FRANCES MORRELL, and
children's education will suffer. She challenges Baker to adopt the classic Tory remedy: ballot the parents first

IN THE LATE sixties Marylebone Grammar School was closed by the Inner London Education Authority. Kenneth Baker, the local MP, was bitterly opposed to the decision. Ever since he has publicly campaigned for the abolition of the ILEA.

Last Thursday, 20 years later, he achieved his objective. As Education Secretary, Baker announced that ILEA was to be broken up and its functions divided among the twelve inner London boroughs. An education authority which has existed under one name or another since the London School Board was established in 1870 is to be wiped off the map.

Might is right. In anticipation of ILEA's destruction, a chorus of vindictive mythologising has begun. Partly, this is Tory triumphalism, partly it's a more widespread hostility to Labour institutions. The voices of would-be beneficiaries, hastily changing sides, can clearly be discerned through the cacophany.

Unconstitutional move

The government has no mandate for the break-up of the ILEA. The proposal was not in the manifesto presented by the Conservative Party to the electors in the last election. Indeed, it has never been included in any Conservative manifesto in any general election. Even the London Tories did not include it in *their* manifesto for the ILEA elections in 1986. The reason for the exclusion of the idea was the same in all cases: the proposal was known to be unpopular.

The Conservatives actually put to the electors a proposal to allow London boroughs to opt out of ILEA if they chose. The expectation was that three Tory boroughs would do so. The scheme has been widely criticised as administratively unworkable. The government has accepted that criticism and so now intends to amend its own legislation to provide for the complete break-up of ILEA within two years instead. But it is constitutional sleight of hand to proceed from a voluntary opt-out proposal to compulsory break-up.

Only a ballot of parents in each of ILEA's 1,004 schools could justify such a huge constitutional change as abolishing the ILEA without clearance, so to speak, in a general election.

Ballots these days are regularly required. The Baker Bill makes provision for parental ballots

prior to opt-out applications from individual schools. Analogous legislation requires trade unions to ballot before taking strike action or establishing political funds. The break up of ILEA is being carried through, it is claimed, for the benefit of parents and their children in inner London schools. Why not, therefore, ask the parents themselves in a school-by-school ballot, administered by the Electoral Reform Society, what they want? I, for one, would consider myself bound by the result of such a vote.

There are further reasons why a certain democratic respectability needs to be acquired by Parliament. ILEA's future has already been properly debated and decided upon. In 1983, Sir Keith Joseph, the then Education Secretary, consulted the public on the proposal to place education in London under the control of a committee of borough representatives; this was plainly the first step to allowing boroughs to opt

“It is constitutional sleight of hand to proceed from a voluntary opt-out proposal to compulsory break-up”

out. The result was overwhelming and negative. Sir Keith withdrew the proposal in favour of a unitary authority. He said to the House of Commons in 1984, “the nature, scale, and importance of the education service in inner London, taken together, justify a directly-elected authority in this special case”.

One year later, Environment Secretary Kenneth Baker was defeated in the House of Lords when he sought discretionary powers to break up the ILEA. The Lords' refusal of those powers was unanimously confirmed by the Commons in the summer of 1985. What was agreed was that the Secretary of State could “review the exercise by the authority of its functions” before 31 March 1991.

Finally, in the ILEA elections of 1986, the Labour Party, pledged to maintain a unitary education authority in inner London — and to defend the budget — won a landslide victory. In an election based on parliamentary constituencies, Tory parliamentary seats like Hampstead and Highgate in the north and Eltham in the south fell to Labour's ILEA candidates. Even more telling, voters in some areas on the same day voted SDP and Liberal for borough council candidates and Labour for ILEA.

Now Baker is sending to the Lords a proposal that the government should break up the ILEA —

without a mandate, without having conducted the review provided for by statute, in disregard of the pledge given by his predecessor and in defiance of the voters' wishes as shown in the ILEA elections. He is at the same time asking the Upper House to reverse its vote of less than three years ago and endorse his plan. Without impartially conducted parental ballots, their Lordships cannot honourably do so. Their attention should be drawn to this point.

Tory MPs are advocating break-up for what they suggest are urgent educational reasons which override constitutional niceties. ILEA spends too much, they say. Standards of achievement are too low. Abolition will improve matters. The argument at least has the merit of brevity.

Is ILEA's expenditure excessive? In my opinion — and that of Her Majesty's Inspectorate — spending on education throughout the country is too low. A jumble sale economy of parental fund-raising is emerging in response to government cuts. ILEA certainly spends relatively more than other education authorities, but provision is only adequate — and, of course, less generous than that prevailing in the private schools to which the children of cabinet ministers go.

All London services cost more. ILEA spends one and a half times more than the average education authority outside London. The Metropolitan police spends twice as much. Inner London social services — run by boroughs — spend three times as much.

The truth is that, in volume terms, ILEA provides more than other education authorities. It is more than a schools service and it supports its schools more. It provides an adult education service for example, a special education needs programme, a library service, a computer service and a youth service which is regularly in touch with 250,000 young people. The consequence for the inner city of a cut-back in these services is horrible.

However, the issue of ILEA spending is quite irrelevant to its abolition. From the Conservative point of view, ILEA spending will have been brought under financial control *before* abolition: it cannot therefore be used as an argument in favour of it.

ILEA is rate-capped and doesn't receive any government grant. The Education Secretary has imposed a draconian budget on ILEA for 1988/89, involving a 12 per cent cut in spending and the loss of several thousand jobs. Tory boroughs have given a pledge to parents that they will maintain the level of school resourcing they inherit from ILEA. Baker's savage budget is designed to ensure that Labour takes the blame for the cuts while enabling Tory councillors to keep their promises.

What, then, about the standard of achievement in London schools. Is it high enough? Will abolition improve it? Certainly, exam results in

London are below the national average and the standard of education in many schools needs improving. This point of view has been publicly shared by Labour members on ILEA, heads, London teachers and parents since 1981. This is why three independent inquiries — the Hargreaves, Thomas and Fish reports — were commissioned into secondary, primary and special London schools. This is why examination results were published, D.C. Hargreaves appointed chief inspector, made independently accountable to the Authority, and asked to prepare a programme for improving standards in all London schools. He was to report annually and in public on his progress.

This process of self-examination was carried through while ILEA was continuing to cope with the closure programme caused by the 33 per cent drop of the population in inner London. ILEA was also in the process of responding more sensitively to the transformation of London into a multi-racial city in which more than 170 mother tongues are spoken. The sharp rise in unemployment and the increase in family poverty contributed to the complexity of the challenge.

But Labour's programme for raising the quality of education was undermined by a series of strategic crises, engineered by government. There were the three separate government attempts to break up the authority, plus the abolition of the GLC (from which ILEA derived its supply services). The three-year national dispute between the teaching unions and the Education Secretary did great harm in London. The government provoked and prolonged that dispute to drive the middle classes into the private sector.

It is hard to see how the fresh trauma of breaking up the authority into twelve borough-sized chunks is going to assist the schools in the process of raising standards; or that the grouping of the boroughs into hastily-assembled consortia has any element of a rational plan for London's education. The loss of first-class educationists from the service; acute teacher shortages in areas like Hackney and Lewisham; the abandonment of the system by parents with the resources to leave; the provision of badly-resourced schooling for the poorest families in the country; the destruction of support services that make a vital contribution to the life of the inner city and its school system: these are the true consequences of the Baker plan.

The worst aspect of this precipitate decision is that London local government is due for another review. There is no strategic planning in London now that the GLC has been abolished. Since the twelve inner London boroughs were established and their boundaries drawn, the population has fallen by a million, leaving some boroughs too small in population to be viable. Breaking up the education service in advance of the inevitable re-organisation of the boroughs is wildly irresponsible.

Londoners should be consulted on properly thought-out alternative plans for administering their services. One idea is for two multi-purpose authorities, north and south of the Thames. Some believe London should be divided into quadrants. Until a consensus has been arrived at, no fresh decisions should be taken.

Their Lordships should reject the proposal to break up the ILEA, and tell government to review local government, including the education service, in London as a whole. □

Frances Morrell is a former Labour leader of ILEA.

Throw down the dented shield

ILEA is no longer a democratic forum, argues LINCOLN CRAWFORD.

Baker is forcing the Labour group to put through cuts which will ruin public education in London

FEW people yet realise that, over and above the destruction in 1990 of ILEA, Education Secretary Kenneth Baker has imposed a budget on the authority so desperate and draconian that the education service in London will be all but destroyed within the next twelve months.

Sir Peter Newsam, a former chief education officer of ILEA, has publicly warned Baker that he should be aware of the consequences of his action. In his opinion, a Bronx or Chicago style scenario looms in inner London.

The question for Labour councillors is whether they too should share responsibility for bringing about the disintegration of London's education service by proposing and voting for Kenneth Baker's budget. I do not believe that they should; which is why I have tabled a motion in the ILEA Labour group proposing that the option of majority opposition should be considered.

The normal argument against majority opposition is summarised by Neil Kinnock's powerful image of the "dented shield": better to have Labour in control locally under Conservative constraints than a Tory administration. But it is difficult to see how this argument applies to ILEA. The ferocity of Baker's attack on the budget is frightening: for example, the authority's current spending is £1,099 million; Baker has allowed us a precept which enables us to raise only £955 million on the rates — which, with inflation, leaves a shortfall of £144 million. Such a massive cut in a single financial year would be impossible.

ILEA responded to Baker by offering to spread the £144 million reduction over three, instead of one year — a 15 per cent cut over the three years. Baker rejected the offer. ILEA then offered to cut £65 million in one year — savage but achievable, and equivalent to a 6 per cent cut. Baker refused. Baker has required ILEA to cut by 11 per cent within twelve months.

The scale of the cuts required is so huge officers have advised that they do not believe it is physically possible to carry them through in a year. A herculean struggle to reach an almost impossible cuts target is scarcely an example of Labour mitigating the force of the Tory blow. Labour, in negotiations with the government over the budget, has achieved nothing, except an offer of £15 million exclusively for redundancies. The education reform programme, begun by the previous Labour administration, aimed to deliver an improved standard of education and to eliminate discrimination against black and Asian children, and against girls. It cannot be carried forward in the current circumstances.

Certainly Labour members have a remaining

duty to defeat the government's plan to break up ILEA. Frances Morrell and Elizabeth Monck have put forward a proposal for a parental ballot conducted by the Electoral Reform Society (or some other reputable body) in every one of ILEA's 1,004 schools before the Lords vote for or against break-up (see opposite). In my judgment, it is much easier to campaign for parental support on the basis of refusing to make the cuts required by Baker — and a victory in those ballots would be a condemnation of the cuts as well. If Labour simply remains in office and carries out the cuts, the public will feel that politicians, as usual, are more concerned with the pleasures of office than questions of fundamental principle.

A second argument against going into majority opposition hinges on the unreality of a majority opposing a minority in the council chamber, and voting down its proposals while refusing to hold office. I would be against casting a majority vote against Baker's budget because it would be illegal, if successful. This makes ILEA no longer a democratic forum. Labour should attend the committee meetings, oppose the Tories and abstain, giving the reason for so doing. At least then the responsibility for this terrible and unstoppable act would be laid at the door of those who are really responsible.

Obviously majority opposition in ILEA has implications for other local councils. Part of the problem for the national party in considering this strategy is that we have just emerged from a period of adventurist local politics. The tactics pursued against rate-capping brought Labour locally into disrepute. Majority opposition is bound up in people's minds with that approach. A willingness to take responsibility for difficult decisions is now the most-prized virtue in local councillors. This is as it should be. However, ILEA is in exceptional circumstances. The scale of the budget cuts, the imminence of break-up and, above all, the war of attrition against it since 1979 makes its position unique.

The incompatibility of remaining in power with the manifesto on which ILEA fought the election is stark. In May 1986, Labour won a landslide victory in inner London on its education proposals. We pledged to defend the budget, maintain a unitary education service, to improve the quality of education, and enhance equality of access to it. In voting for Baker's budget we would be acting wholly contrary to fundamental pledges. When national government prevents councillors from keeping their manifesto promise to the voters, the rational thing to do is to say so publicly and refrain from power. That is why I suggest that after consultation with the party and unions, ILEA's offices and group should vacate office, surrender the empty appurtenances of power and return to the task of winning London on the basis of telling our supporters what is really going on. □

Lincoln Crawford is the ILEA member for Tooting.

JOURNALISM is now sophisticated enough to debunk itself. The mechanism works like this. An event, or more likely a sequence of events, is likened to a famous or notorious period in the past when similar things happened: so, the crash of '87 was compared at length and at breadth to the crash of '26. Then, having done that, the voracious media drag in pundits with titles like "professor" or "former adviser" (a chilling one that: why is this person's advice no longer being sought?) to say: *whole thing overdone, only specious parallels, things much better/worse now, history never repeats itself.*

We are in the midst of another such media parallelogram. The various industrial actions — among the seamen, the pit deputies, the Ford workers and the health service staff — have been first likened to the "winter of discontent", then these parallels have been sneered at for the flimsy things they are. Parallel: quite a lot of workers are taking industrial action. Debunk: this is not a wave, but a number of different breakers crashing on separate shores.

It is not, of course, 1978-79 revisited: it is only the novelty of simultaneous and quite serious industrial actions which make these parallels possible at all. But there are two underlying similarities which are important: first, they very largely come from below; and second, the actions, if prolonged, will not do any good, least of all to those involved in them.

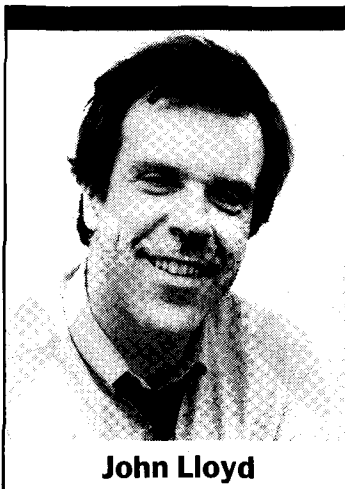
In the pits, the action by the deputies has given rise to an extraordinary campaign on the part of British Coal, seeking to prove that Peter McNestry, the deputies' general secretary, is in the pocket of Arthur Scargill. For sure, McNestry has a harder political edge to him than former and present officials of his union: but his main source of bitterness is that consultative, representational and even safety procedures in his industry have, in his view, been diluted following the strike, over which he and his members had very little purchase.

In any event, the huge — 90 per cent — vote in favour of a strike over a 4.28 per cent pay increase (or a return to incentive payments) could scarcely have been manipulated by a national official in a small union whose members pay much more attention to their local leaders. The rejection was fuelled by the sight of mineworkers, over whom the deputies have a basic rate differential, earning more pay — especially on overtime shifts — because of higher productivity bonuses for the face workers. British Coal has responded by threatening to break the closed shop of a union whose existence is now threatened by advances in technology and by proposed changes in the demarcation lines between miners and deputies.

The ferries' strike was sparked by the announcement of redundancies at the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, but stoked by grievances in a number of ports, especially the big ferry ports. The main ferry operators — P and O and Sealink — are under pressure from two sources: lower unit costs in other lines which use fewer shifts than those stipulated in the agreements they have with the National Union of Seamen; and the impending completion of the Channel Tunnel.

These companies are now demanding fewer crews and greater flexibility between jobs: their sanction is to "flag out" — take a flag of convenience (Liberia, Panama) or an Isle of Man or Channel Islands flag (which would still allow them to fly the Red Ensign), thereby freeing themselves of the agreements in one bound. The NUS is in a mood to make a last stand.

STATE OF THE NATION



John Lloyd

That sinking feeling

Ford is ultimately more important than either of those, because of the weathervane effect the company's settlement has in the past exercised on other pay settlements and may do again, at a time of mounting government anxiety over rising unit labour costs, and rising inflation. The deal rejected by the workers after acceptance by union officials last week was over three years — raising pay by 7 per cent this year, and by 2 per cent above inflation in the next two years, and harmonising blue and white collar rates and conditions, and working practices to bring Ford more in line with Japanese shopfloor methods, now in place at the Nissan plant in County Durham. It was a tremendously ambitious deal: the workers clearly thought it was worth more.

FINALLY, *the NHS dispute* — really a complex of disputes covering pay, conditions, underfunding, understaffing and a certain consciousness of having caught the national mood — will continue for as long as the government is unable to produce a political response similar to that delivered by Kenneth Baker in the once equally fraught world of education (it is an irony that there is much more wrong with our education, in the sense that the working class is being comprehensively failed by it, than there is with the NHS: yet superior political skills, coupled with a general lack of support for educational institutions, ensure that it is not presently a hot potato for the government).

It is a curious industrial action. Not only is it uncertain what is its cause, it is unlikely to succeed in its aims precisely because it is industrial action. There is no question of the frustration and anxiety within the NHS: it is expressed by all who work in it, at every level. Nor is there any question that to throw some more money at it would help greatly — in the sense that it would keep people alive, and cure people faster.

But the apparent root causes of the protests — the rising market value of nurses who do not receive anything like their market labour price, especially when compared to other highly-trained workers, coupled with the continuing rise in demand for certain kinds of treatment stimulated

by a number of surgical breakthroughs, especially in cardiology — will only be addressed with the application of so much more money that any government will have to look hard at the staffing and efficiency of the NHS.

It is easy to grasp that industrial action in the health service is soon likely to be self-defeating: as soon as real action is taken, and real harm is done to the patients. It is less easy to see that action is also self-defeating in the other disputes: but that is the case.

Each of them is in an industry where the workforce faces a future which is composed of continued job cuts and continued demands for flexibility. As Jimmy Airlie, the engineering union's official who deals with Ford, admitted in an interview earlier this week, the need for Ford UK to respond to better working practices not just in Japanese companies, but in its own plants elsewhere, is hardly in dispute.

The seamen face competition not just from more efficient ship operators and from cut-price "flagged-out" labour, but soon from the Channel Tunnel: P and O justifies its demands for demanning on these grounds. The pit deputies face a world where coal demand is likely to fall once the Central Electricity Generating Board is privatised and let off the leash which forced it to buy relatively expensive British coal.

IT IS DISHONEST to propose that there is much which can stop these trends: clearly, the present government wishes to accentuate them, while a future one could only oppose them by subsidising performance below the international standard, a high price which neither Labour nor the remnants of the Alliance is likely to wish to pay.

This is neither a quietist nor defeatist argument. On a practical level, it is obviously reasonable for workers, especially those in profitable organisations like Ford, to demand higher pay for higher productivity — though the result is likely to be more redundancies. In the longer term, the opportunity for the left is not to misread the current coincidence of disputes as a return of a general anti-government militancy, but to seek to draw out lines of argument for an industrial and economic settlement which might address these root causes.

The radicalism of the past eight years has been patchy: the roots of how work is organised and what shapes the jobs market are still barely touched — or, where touched, have been dealt with in a cosmetic, rhetorical fashion. In using the whip of unemployment as the main agent for change in the labour market, the government and the employers were always open to fresh challenge once it ceased to sting as much, and especially when unemployment levels fell.

It has offered no long-term structure within which rapid change can be managed and accepted: no system of education and training which, far from looking back to the old days of settled communities and trades, has to transcend the fragmented present to a future where education fits people for constant change, and teaches them to make sense of it.

In all honesty, the left has not been good at proposing such change, either. But the lesson of the 1988 false winter of discontent is that it can benefit from the conservatism of the government's approach by a radicalism of its own: one which is prepared to ensure that greater productivity and efficiency are put to the service of those who are expected to deliver it.

My body, myself?

BARBARA ROSENBLUM's life is drawing to a close. A few weeks ago she decided against experimental treatment for advanced cancer of the liver, believing the inevitable side-effects outweighed its uncertain benefits. Early last year, told she had only months to live, she began a further course of chemotherapy. Here she describes the capricious effects of that treatment on her body

MY DOCTOR PUT it to me very clearly: I had to have chemotherapy, surgery and radiation, in that order. I had to have chemotherapy for three months before surgery because the tumour in my breast was too large to remove surgically. It had grown too quickly and was now virtually inoperable. Chemotherapy would shrink the tumour, permitting surgery without skin graft. There was another reason for chemotherapy first: the cancer had spread to my lymph nodes. It was a serious, aggressive cancer and I would require the most aggressive treatment available.

Before the first treatment, my doctor prepared me for the various side effects I might experience. My hair would fall out, I'd have mouth sores, I'd vomit, my periods would stop. So, after the first treatment, I vomited about 30 times in 48 hours, had tired muscles and aching joints and was exhausted from spasmodic vomiting. Even if you didn't have cancer and just vomited that much from flu, you'd be exhausted. And that was just the first week.

The second week, I had low blood counts, extreme fatigue and breathlessness from the lack of sufficient haemoglobin — and consequently oxygen — in my blood. Almost exactly on the twenty-first day following the first set of three injections, my hair began to fall out. Not just on my head. I lost my pubic hair as well. But my period still arrived.

After the second treatment, I had all the side effects again. But my period still arrived. I thought for sure I'd beat this: I wouldn't go into the menopause.

Following the third treatment, I had all the same side effects but, this time, I had a shorter period. Still, I didn't attend to it much because, by this time, my nose and anus were bleeding from chemotherapy and I grew alarmed. It seemed as though I was bleeding from new places and losing the familiar bleeding from familiar places.

Three weeks later, after the fourth treatment, my period stopped. I began to get hot flushes, sometimes as frequently as one an hour. My ears glowed bright red, my face darkened and sweat collected on the surface of my skin. I felt like a vibrating tuning fork for the next two minutes. Then my internal air-conditioning took over but didn't know when to stop. I got cold; I'd quickly

cover myself to avoid the chill of perspiration. I could never find the right amount of clothing because my internal thermostat was completely off.

I no longer had any sense of what "room temperature", that euphemism for a shareable external reality, was. I had no reliable information from my body about the temperature of the outside world. My only information came from deep inside my body and I knew that was distorted and unreliable.

Hat collection

All the hair on my head fell out. Frantically, I searched for a good wig before this occurred but nothing fitted my small size head. I found a hairdresser who worked for an opera company who used his connections to get a wig for me. The wig fitted but felt foreign; it made my scalp hot and itchy. I decided, like many other women who become bald from chemotherapy, not to disguise my loss.

Hats now hang off any available hook in my flat. I have cotton hats, wool hats, berets, hats with brims, ski caps. Friends have knitted caps for me. And, even now, every time I go into the street, I am still aware that people look at me. A vital aspect of my social identity has been taken away. In the last six months, I've lost my hair twice. And, before that, three times. Practice does not make it easier.

Losing my hair has been much harder than losing my breast. No one can see underneath my clothes. But everyone can see my hair. I never thought my hair was beautiful: it was a simple brown mop that I combed and washed. It grew out of my scalp. It was a part of me. It was mine.

And as I saw it cover the pillow, as I saw hanks of it come out on the comb and clog the plughole, I sank powerlessly into resignation.

I knew my hair would grow back when I went

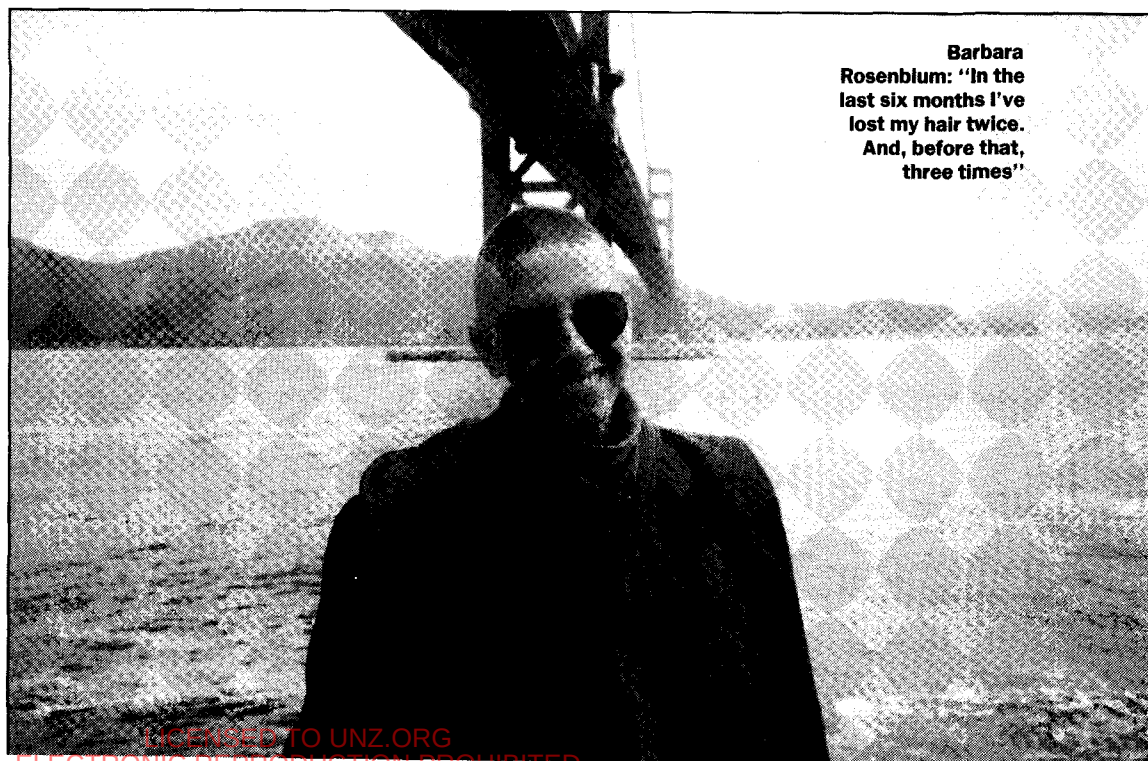
off the powerful chemotherapy to another combination of chemicals. It did, but thinly. And then I went off chemotherapy completely and all my hair came back, thick and spiky. But, during that time when I didn't take chemotherapy, the cancer spread to my liver and then my lungs. I had to have chemotherapy again, the strong stuff. Now it is clear that I will never have a full head of hair again. I lose my hair once a month. I will look like a Buddhist monk until the day I die.

My pubis is as smooth as a fig. Even a peach with its infantile fuzziness is too hairy to describe my pudenda. It is bald, completely smooth except for one Fu-manchu-like hair, straight and long, that resisted decimation. It is a dark sturdy branch that extends from my skin. It is my mysterious hair, this proud survivor.

Losing my pubic hair, I felt naked and embarrassed, like a pre-pubescent child. I was too exposed and didn't want to be touched.

My vagina was changing too. The vaginal tissue was thinning and becoming more sensitive to pressure and friction. It began to hurt when Sandy and I had sex. I then noticed that my ordinary levels of dampness seemed to be changing: I was becoming less moist. Worst of all, I stopped lubricating when I became sexually excited. That single physiological fact made me realise that the agreements and understandings I had with my body were no longer in effect. If I no longer lubricated when I got sexually aroused, then how could I know I was feeling sexy?

Until I began chemotherapy, my relationship with my body was simple, direct, and uncomplicated; friendly, warm and pleasurable. Sex was always fun and untroubled. The cycles of my ability to become aroused were exquisitely dependent on my hormones. Ten days before my period, like clockwork, I would begin to feel sexual. This would continue for the next ten days and, when my period came, the urge would fizzle



Barbara Rosenblum: "In the last six months I've lost my hair twice. And, before that, three times"

out. In other words, I had a physiologically based definition of my own sexual excitement: if my body produced some of the sensations which, through experience, had become my standard set of signals for sexual excitement, then I knew what to do with my behaviour. But when chemotherapy induced an early and rapidly onsetting menopause and my hormone levels dropped dramatically, I was no longer on a monthly hormone cycle. I could no longer tell when I felt sexy or premenstrual. I got very confused about what I was feeling and when I was feeling it.

Without body clues to signal me as to when and how I was feeling sexy, I consulted my head. My lover, Sandy, helped me recreate situations that had a proven record of creating the right mood in me. We purposefully incorporated the old reliable environmental cues that had worked so well in the past: excellent food, candlelight, intimate conversation, music. I felt as close as could be but nothing was happening in my body. We tried romantic meals at cosy restaurants. Nothing. Massages with scented oils. Nothing. Morning hiking in the country followed by steaming coffee and good pancakes. Nothing. Everything in my head told me this should be the right moment to make love but there were no signals coming from my body. Sandy touched me in all the loving, familiar ways. It was soothing, pleasant but not sexy. Nothing. The conclusion: for me, sex does not work in the head.

We stopped making love. Instead, we found new ways of being intimate. Sandy, who is a very light sleeper and consequently sleeps far away from me so as not to be disturbed by my twists and turns, now held me through the night. Our hands found new ways to console each other. I was reminded of how animals touch, lick and chew each other. They pick at and groom each other, making the other feel secure and loved with their paws. I would touch Sandy's throat in a spot I knew contained all her tears: she would sob. And right during the chemotherapy infusion, when the chemicals were flowing into my veins from huge syringes. Sandy helped me relax by touching my back and neck lightly.

New dialogues

When facing one's own death, what happens to one's sexuality? I suppose, for some women, sexual feelings become intensified. They become hungry for life, hungry for life through sex. Erotic energy keeps them alive. I suspect Sandy would have liked it better if I experienced the life force as erotic energy, as libido. But I don't. My life energy comes in another form, in the passion to learn everything, to feel everything, to live every moment with presence and intensity. To study new things. To master new areas of knowledge. To write. Alone and with Sandy. Together, we have developed a new form that can accommodate our individual and unique voices into a dialogue. We write about things that are important to us. We make love at the typewriter, not in the bedroom.

As I write now, I see that I was learning a new language of the body but it was the language of symptoms, not of sexuality. I became sensitive to when my body was retaining water. I could glance at my various parts, my legs, arms, stomach and chest and notice a puffiness that had not been there the day before. I learned that when I became puffy, my metabolism was off and that meant my



liver wasn't functioning properly. I calculated the ebbs and flows of my energy because my activities, like taking a walk, depended on an exact calibration of that energy. I observed how it wavered, how much time I had between the waves, how it disappeared all at once, without forewarning. I discovered how close I could come to throwing up without actually having to do it. I studied the gradations of nausea and their subdivisions and how to assess when nausea would pass or when I had to take an anti-nausea pill. I learned how to move quickly to the kerb while walking the dog, emptying the contents of my stomach there, not on the pavement, and how to look reasonably dignified afterward. I learned how to run fast while compressing my anal sphincter muscles, so that I wouldn't shit in my pants from the diarrhoea that chemo induced. Sometimes I didn't make it.

In the last two and a half years, I peed in my pants three times. Chemotherapy irritates the bladder. That's why doctors tell you to drink half a gallon of liquid whenever you get chemotherapy. The chemicals are so strong that they can even cause cancer of the bladder. On the few occasions I couldn't control my urine, I noticed that I didn't get the usual signal that told me it was time to think

about going to the bathroom. It didn't begin as a small pressure or urge, as it normally does, and then build up. No, rather, it came on with a burst of urgency, as if I'd been holding it for hours. I had to learn this new language too.

The form of my body changed too. I lost a breast. Two years ago, when I had a mastectomy, I was too worried about my life to worry about my breast. I hoped the doctors would "get" all the cancer in my breast, that post-operative radiation would control any errant cells that had not been excised by surgery. Losing a breast did alter my body image, as well as my body, but I never felt a diminishment of my femininity. My breasts were never the center of my womanhood.

I'm very lucky. Sandy has been exceptionally steadfast and easy about the changes in my body. She did not compel me to pay attention to her needs, her anxieties, her worries. She never made me feel inadequate or freakish. Her face never revealed shock or terror. She was easy with my scar, touching it delicately. She always got the bucket during vomiting bouts, never cringing or complaining. She was always softly, gently there, through everything.

Signals about hunger also got confused when I began chemotherapy. Up until that time, food was



It was too hard. I decided to go to a shop for larger women. While walking to it, I passed a maternity shop and thought that these clothes might fit me. They did.

The surface of my skin changed. My veins became more prominent because the fluid in my tissues pressed them against my skin. Even the tiniest capillaries started bursting and my skin became marbled with designs. Where the pressure was greatest, on my inner thighs, the capillaries looked like calligraphy. The oiliness of my skin disappeared and it became parched and crusty. Skin fell from my face almost as often as my eyebrows and eyelashes, leaving a white layer of flakiness. My fingernails first turned black from chemotherapy and then they became ridged with white bands. My fingernails became like alum, soft and whitish, and they ripped rather than broke.

Fragile veins

It is now two and a half years since I first got the diagnosis of breast cancer. And now, here I am, getting chemotherapy six days a month. For two days I'm in the hospital and for four days I'm attached to an ambulatory pump. It hangs from my waist on a velcro belt, secured by a safety pin. It looks like a Walkman; tubes extend from its square form into a one inch needle that is inserted into my chest. It is attached to a portacath, a plastic container that is surgically placed in my chest. My veins are too fragile. They've stabbed me too many times and missed. They have had too many veins blow on them, that is, burst open with gushing blood. My veins roll around too much and they don't stay still. Chemotherapy has burned my veins too many times, making them fibrotic and painfully sensitive.

When you wear the portable pump it's like having shrapnel inside you, like an artificial hip or a metal plate instead of your skull.

My hand rests on the pump: I sense its vibrations and hear it churning along. I sleep with it, this Walkman tied to my waist, with the aid of Valium and sleeping pills. It runs on batteries. It is saving my life. Other people wear pumps too: diabetics get insulin, older people get liquid nutrition, people with Aids get antibiotics, and people with intractable pain get a continuous infusion of pain-killing drugs like morphine. I have cancer and I get chemotherapy. I hate the pump.

Sometimes I can hardly use human language to tell how I feel. When I am frightened, feel alone and can't sleep, need to take sleeping pills because I think about dying, I explain to Sandy, "If I were a dog, I'd be shaking and trembling." Animals don't use words, their bodies speak for them. While I am not mute, I am often frustrated by how the limits of language circumscribe my ability to communicate events in my body. But I am not an animal. I am a human being, an articulate one at that, who is challenged to find words to apply to sensations I've never had before, challenged to find meaning and stability despite a changing body. I am caught in a relentless metamorphosis. You cannot imagine how stable and firm and fixed your body looks to me. You cannot imagine that I can feel my molecules moving around, wondering what miraculous shape they will prefer next time.

Sue Hillwood Harris

one of the great pleasures of my life. Over the years, I'd become very sophisticated about food and very knowledgeable about its preparation. Unlike many people who don't cook for themselves when they are alone, I didn't need the company of another person to stimulate me to cook: my own pleasure was sufficient. I would cook sweetbreads in a cream sauce or chicken with lemon and tarragon. Tastes would explode on my tongue, clear and definite tastes.

So when chemotherapy caused painful sores in my mouth and the only thing I could consume was a blenderful of fruit and yogurt, I became despondent. It hurt when I put solid food in my mouth. My appetite and desire for particular flavours and sensations were annihilated. I could no longer tell when I was hungry, or when I wanted a specific texture or flavour. All I wanted to do was to get the food down and keep it down and to make sure it didn't hurt as I ate. I treated myself like a hospital patient, making an eating schedule and sticking to it, making sure I had enough protein, liquid, and calorific content.

There is never a time in my treatment cycle when my mouth isn't sore or sensitive. I can't have spices, I can't have hot Chinese food, I can no longer savour my favourite cuisine, Indian food.

My diet resembles that of an ulcer patient: bland and creamy. My relationship to food has been permanently altered and I grieve this loss every day.

I can't drink alcohol because of my liver. Ironically, I developed a very fine palate and sophisticated tastes for drinking wine. I can't smoke marijuana because my lungs are sensitive. I can't take cocaine or other recreational drugs because it might hurt my liver. I now have a very excellent relationship with coffee.

In the last two years, I gained three sizes. I watched my body stretch to accommodate all the fluid that was collecting in my tissues. I could not believe how rapidly my body shape was changing. I needed new clothes immediately but going shopping was an horrendous experience. Sandy was kind and patient. She had reached her full height of six feet by the age of thirteen and shopping for clothes that didn't fit was a familiar experience. Turning what was humiliating into an adventure was an old defence for her and served us both well now. I'd be crying from frustration in the fitting room and Sandy would quietly leave and cheerfully return with a few items in the next size.

One day, I stopped going to department stores.

Death in the family way



A house is not a home until you've battered someone to death: Terry O'Quinn sells real estate in *The Stepfather*

We've had the murderous mistress; now JUDITH WILLIAMSON reviews a movie which forcefully places the guilt somewhere else — and to rather more thrilling effect

SO MANY PEOPLE have told me how disturbed they were by *Fatal Attraction* that I feel I must publicise an ideological antidote, guaranteed to cut through that sick creepy feeling it left you (and me) with. This antidote is *The Stepfather*: a concise low-budget film with a little-known director (Joseph Ruben) and no stars. As a thriller it is taut and well acted, every bit as suspenseful as its opposite; but here what is monstrous is not the single woman but precisely the idealisation of family values in which a film like *Fatal Attraction* cloyingly deals.

The film opens with a perfect suburban street: trees line the sidewalk and a paper-boy cycles between them, throwing his bundles onto kempt front lawns. Taking this all in, the camera — disturbingly smooth and mobile — glides through an upstairs window where a man is washing and shaving off his beard. He packs his old clothes and wedding-ring into a suitcase and walks downstairs — pausing to tidy some toys into an over-full toybox and push down the lid. He moves past a scene of mayhem in the front room, where a woman and child lie hacked to pieces, straightens a chair, and passes through the front door into the sunny street, where he picks up the paper and walks off, whistling. Taking the ferry into town, he drops the suitcase overboard.

The next thing we see is another sunny street lined with trees; a girl cycles along casually, and a caption tells us this is "One year later". Everything is as smooth as before; but as the girl unmounts in front of one of the neat suburban houses, we experience the first sudden movement of the film, as someone bursts out at her from the back garden. It is her mother, throwing a bucket of leaves over her head, and the two begin a mock-fight. Their game stops abruptly when a man comes home: it is the newly-shaven character from the first scene.

Where this film differs from many conventional thrillers is that we know, from the opening, who represents danger: it is the stepfather, whose obsession with family life, totally "normal" in a film like *Fatal Attraction*, is thus neatly pathologised from the very start. His patriarchal values — "father knows best" — take on a more macabre tone the "nicer" he gets in his efforts to turn his new wife and stepdaughter into a perfect family.

That the film's attack on patriarchy is more than an accidental effect of the plot is shown by the way its script and imagery constantly take us beyond the particular. Mr Murderer works for American Eagle Realty and feels that his job is "not just selling houses but selling the American

Dream''. His language comes straight (and straight is the word) from the Reagan/Thatcher script computer; and his clean-clean-clean appearance makes him look all the time like a man in a lawn-mower ad. However, the most subtle and disturbing aspect of his psychology is his obsessive measuring-up of each new family against the Ideal; he kills from *disappointment*. In a spine-chilling piece of self-righteousness he muses that a man could be "*driven to do something like that*" (my italics).

This testing of real relationships against a normative blueprint makes a vivid political point: the man is a kind of walking Clause 28, his mission being to clean up any domestic situation that deviates from the ideal.

This is emphasised in the film by the way the plot's Goodies are *imperfect*: it is the Baddy who, apart from his few murderous outbursts, is always calm and smiling. This says something about repression: its flip-side is violence. Here is the importance of the mother-daughter fight scene, and a similar "friendly" fight between the daughter and her boyfriend: the truly frightening people are those who never let go. The film's sub-plot, involving a reporter on the murderer's trail, shows that Goodies can be unshaven, rude, drive un-smart cars, and — in the lead-up to the climax — can even be a rowing, adulterous couple in the middle of splitting up.

Because the other point about repression is that it doesn't work. The image of the toy-box being forced shut is exactly reversed in the first moment of eruption with the new family: the girl goes into the basement to get icecream from the freezer and as she lifts the lid she hears her stepfather having a violent fit. Another sub-plot, with the girl's analyst, reinforces this point as he — of all people — makes a "Freudian" slip; after inventing a fake identity in order to investigate the stepfather he forgets to keep it up and lets himself "show through".

When the murderer finally flips, *he* forgets who he is "this time": it is appropriate that his stepdaughter stabs him with a broken mirror. In a climax that smartly invokes Hitchcock (a shower, birds on a wire) only to subvert his typically sadistic voyeurism (nothing happens in the shower, the birds just sit there) the two women, mother and daughter, succeed without male help (sorry for spoiling the plot) and moreover one of the mother's shots hits the picture of an eagle, shattering that image of American Patriarchy into a thousand pieces.

It is this kind of symbolism which, though obvious, is so enjoyable for us ideological misfits. During the film the stepfather has been building, with his violent tools, a cute little birdhouse which stands on a high pole: in the closing scene the girl cuts down this emblem of phallic domesticity and the camera follows it to the ground.

This overturned representation summarises the whole film; and also explains why it is unlikely to be a sell-out. For what is frightening about *Fatal Attraction* is less the film itself than its popularity. A brave cinema would programme these movies together: and leave audiences to ponder why, of two thrillers, one which monstrosifies the single woman should be a hit, while the one which monstrosifies the ideal family is not. □

The Stepfather (18) is on general release.

New Statesman 12 February 1988



Identity battles through the graffiti in Rasheed Araeen's frustrated self-portrait

ART

Paint strippers

James Hall

Essential Black Art
Chisenhale Gallery, London E3, to 5 March

LAST WEEK'S *NS* asked if there is such a thing as "black photography". This week, it's "black art".

Essential Black Art includes the work of ten "politically motivated" Afro/Asian artists and is curated by Rasheed Araeen, who has lived and worked in this country since 1964. Araeen says that "the purpose of this exhibition is to put 'black art' in its proper socio-historical context which is contemporary art and which has nothing to do with Afro/Asian traditions". And the show attacks the emergence of the genre "black arts", "managed and controlled by black functionaries", which Araeen sees as part of a

policy of divide-and-rule. By sending blacks back to their various cultural traditions, they can not only be split into much smaller national groupings but are also kept well away from the Western cultural citadel.

The show includes work from the early 1970s onwards, but it is clear that Araeen's version of the "Contemporary art" which should provide the proper socio-historical context for black art is very much governed by the premises of Conceptual art — in other words, of the early 1970s alone. The basis of Conceptual Art was the "de-materialisation" of art — a move away from the unique, palpable art object, with its emphasis on material presence and occupation of a gallery space, to more ephemeral artworks that were often preserved only in photographs. *Essential Black Art* is dominated by collage, prints, posters, photoworks and, above all, combinations of text and image. There are no examples of the thick, virtuoso brushstrokes that have been so crucial to the "return to painting" of the last ten years and, where paint is used, it is usually held in check by an allegory of some sort.

In accordance with this de-materialising aesthetic, there are no three-dimensional works;

this is curious, as some of the most commercially successful black artists of late have been sculptors — and very bold, exuberant ones at that. Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary, Dhruva Mistry, Zadok Ben-David . . . Are none of these black sculptors politically motivated?

Still, the emphasis on the de-materialisation of art isn't whimsical; it highlights an issue that is central to all these artists: the need to deny, or at any rate de-construct, conventional notions of the body, and to search for a new identity. Araeen's "How could one paint a self-portrait?" is a self-photograph over which have been daubed National Front slogans and other racist graffiti. The cruel irony of the work lies in the fact that Araeen has not *painted* his self-portrait; he has made a black-and-white photographic image. It is the racists who have used all the paint. There is a vivid sense of the way in which Araeen is barred from a use of colour because of its association with violence.

Mona Hatoum's "Under Siege" is a series of six black-and-white photos of the blurred image of a woman kneeling down. Each image is overlaid with dark smears and splatters. The conjunction of the dissolving, steamy female image and the smears recalls the shower scene in *Psycho*. Once again, the lurid slashes over the top of the image have the vigour and spontaneity of the macho painterly gesture. It is as though the creation of a painterly "smear" automatically involves an act of mutilation that obscures and destroys the identity of the subject.

An important and radical feature of Conceptual art was the domination and displacement of the painterly image by words (Tom Wolfe's "The Painted Word" is a brilliant satire of the visual logorrhea: the group Art & Language are the best known British practitioners). This was a kind of Protestant iconoclasm that regarded images as decadent, seductive idols that distracted one's intellect from The Word. One of the problems for the artists in this show is how to make a radical challenge to the prejudices and decadence inherent in Western art without simply turning their back on or demoting the visual arts. It is all too easy to turn the image into the submissive footnote to a text, or else to use it as a vehicle for turgid allegories.

Sutapa Biswas's "Housewives with Steak-Knives" is one example of a work overloaded with allegorical symbols: a black woman-cum-buddha, with four hands covered in blood, sticks her tongue out and wears a necklace of severed heads. She holds a knife, a decapitated head, a flag bearing a picture of Judith and Holofernes and a flower. The reference to Judith and Holofernes is indicative of the Old Testament tone: one that strives to be epic and all-inclusive but, in this case, ends up being declamatory, generalised and melodramatic. The image loses its shape — its body, if you like — once all those symbolic meanings are made to hang on it.

It may be a question of finding more lyrical modes of expression rather than trying to be a Poet Laureate writing rousing anthems that are far from self-exploratory. Araeen thinks along the lines of Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" when he says that black artists should view their cultural heritage constructively and critically — live in what Eliot termed "the present moment of the past". Gavin Jantjes's "The First

Real American Target" takes Jasper Johns' "Target" picture and places above it photographs of several Indian chieftains. Some of the meaning of this work depends on a knowledge of Johns' image but, by diverting the meaning of that image with wit and clarity, Jantjes can exploit the Western cultural edifice rather than being incapacitated by it. It may be less ambitious, but it does not inundate the image with words. The best work in *Essential Black Art* seems to be battling *against* the anti-art, anti-body solution and, though the absence of sculpture narrows the debate considerably, there is still enough material to make for a highly provocative show. □

Essential Black Art travels next month to Newcastle, then goes to Huddersfield, Coventry and Brighton.

DANCE

Out of water

Stephanie Jordan

Can dance created specifically for a prison, a hospital, a special school survive the transfer to a traditional venue?

ONE OF THE WAYS in which today's dance companies can build an audience is by destroying the traditional divides — between high and low art, Western and multicultural forms, spectator and performer — in order to attract new *kinds* of audience.

New Midlands Dance has chosen this approach. Based in Warwick and in its third year under artistic director Lesley Hutchinson, its policy is to integrate its work into areas where, hitherto, there's been little access to dance: hospitals, special-needs schools and, most recently, HM Prisons and youth custody centres. In a postmodern spirit of pluralism, its method is carefully to research each different kind of setting, then to undertake intensive residencies of approximately one week. During this time, dancers and musicians give workshops; then, finally, a performance which has developed directly from the context in which it is performed. Choreographers are commissioned to work in collaboration with the New Midlands dancers.

The "shared movement" experience is crucial to the company's work — not doing to their students, some of whom may be severely handicapped, but encouraging them to take responsibility. Decisions certainly have to be made — how to fall, how to absorb another person's weight, what route to take to tunnel under someone else's body — but there is no "wrong way" of doing anything. In line with this policy, New Midlands uses New Dance methods, rather than the didactic approach of ballet or traditional dancery techniques. And recently the company collaborated with the Afro-Caribbean group Kokumba Performing Arts — for the reason that its, too, is a style that welcomes personal choice.

Reports of the company's work have acknowledged its "exceptional ability to motivate

young people", its being a "microcosm of what we are trying to have with education as a whole". The dancers are often invited to return. Kath Howells at Glen Parva Young Offenders' Centre, Leicester, spoke of the self-confidence generated and the sense of co-operation and trust that movement developed within the lads, what the company calls "the positive use of physical energy". Tony Mackin at Glenthorne Youth Treatment Centre, Birmingham, is equally supportive, seeing that the effect of such work on behaviour, both immediate and long-term, is an important research area.

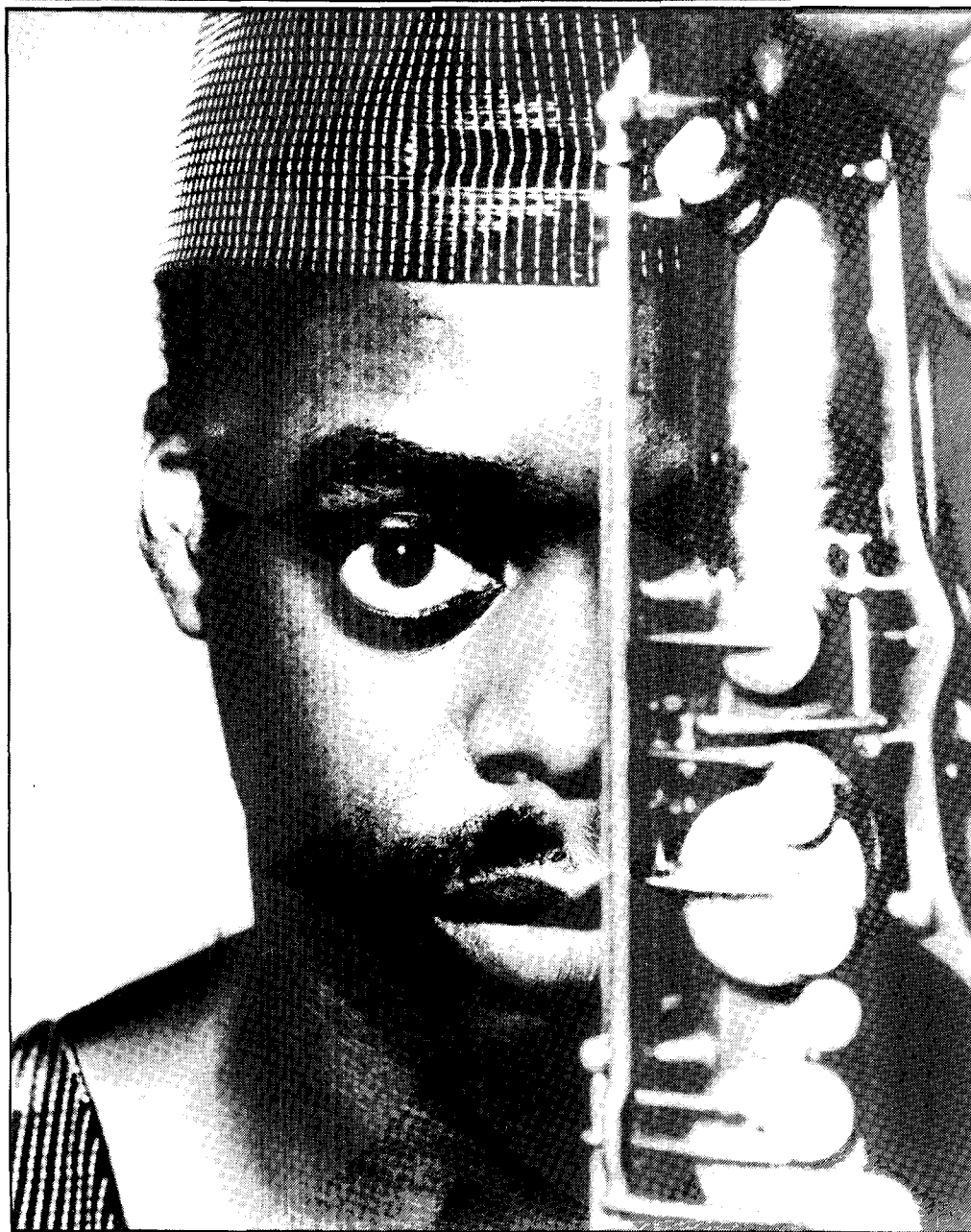
But there's more to New Midlands Dance than an education project. Concurrently with its teaching work, it has a schedule of public performances in dance venues. And this transplantation of pieces from the context for which they were originally designed does, in its very ambition, raise serious problems.

At The Place Theatre in London, New Midlands recently presented both an ILEA matinée and a public performance within this year's "Spring Loaded" Festival. *That's Another Story* by Alessandro Certini is a weaving of tales from personal and family life to a mosaic of sounds suggesting many cultures. The design by Sue Hill suggests a brilliant oriental dance floor with intriguing props, some of which double as musical instruments, an aquarium containing a submerged city and a quilt and jaws that transform into a crocodile.

The structure is postmodern, fragmentary, a "magic carpet-ride" of ideas and scenes — but, endearing though this is, it is insufficient to maintain momentum across a 50-minute timespan. A piece designed for special schools, school-hall intimacy and audiences familiar with the performers and their work does not necessarily work in a more general setting.

The doubts raised by *That's Another Story* were not allayed by Katy Duck's *Another Couple*, a presentation of three characters (Kevin Finnan, Louise Richards and itinerant musician Harry Dawes) seeking some perfect relationship, with dialogue and lyrics by inmates of Drake Hall Women's Prison. Again, it may have had power and relevance in its original setting; at The Place it was merely a bland experience, complicated further by an outraged choreographer's private observations to me that this was no longer *her* piece. Bits had been omitted, bits had been added, points of style had been radically altered. This may have been a partial attempt to modify the piece for its different contexts, but a problem of ownership always arises when collaboration between choreographer, director and company is stressed. Hutchinson must, in future, consult her contributors.

Fortunately, Tim Rubidge's solo *Frank* looked as good as it did last year under the stern eye of its director Jacky Lansley. It is Lansley at her best, integrating and identifying the similar absurdities of dance virtuosity and the glib salesman's claptrap: balance sheets, serious money and hard sell against cartwheels and leaps in *attitude*. By contrast, Frank's sudden emotional breakdown has real pathos. It may not be insignificant that, although this piece has successfully been taken into prisons and elsewhere, it was originally devised for "general" audiences. □



Saxophonist with a destiny: Courtney Pine

JAZZ

Plenty of horns

Charles Fox

SAXOPHONES have been around for almost a century and a half, arriving at about the same time as the Industrial Revolution. For a great many of those years they sounded either apologetic or whingeing, a musical equivalent of the kind of complexion that '20s journalists stigmatised as night-club pallor. Ironically enough, it was jazz, something of a denizen of night clubs, which brought colour to the instrument, providing it with an authoritative voice.

Voices might be more accurate, not just because of the range of saxophones — soprano, alto, tenor, baritone — but also the plurality of sounds and techniques, all reflecting, as good jazz does, the identity of the performer. The same could be said of trumpeters and clarinetists and pianists, yet in their cases traditions of playing existed that went back to long before syncopated music swept the west.

The saxophone was a late arriver in every sense, even within jazz. Coleman Hawkins, the man who

really hoisted the tenor saxophone to aesthetic respectability, still sounded unsure of himself on records he made with Fletcher Henderson's band in the early '20s. But Hawkins was to have his imitators. Some, like Ben Webster and Chu Berry, found individual ways of expanding his style, but the majority took the easy way of mugging up the fashionable phrases. Benny Carter, Lester Young, Charlie Parker — all had assiduous acolytes. But not until John Coltrane's emergence at the very end of the '50s did a particular saxophone style take on the rigour of a method, using harmonic permutation with a ruthlessness that corresponded — in the loosest sense — with what serial composers had been up to in what it's still convenient to call straight music. A truism is unavoidable: some jazz soloists deployed the system imaginatively, others simply obeyed the rules.

The situation needs explaining because of the way that Courtney Pine, undoubtedly the best known British jazz musician around at the moment, idolises Coltrane so intensely — and in such a practical way — that he could sometimes be accused of attempting to deputise for the departed master.

This is underlined by Pine's latest LP, *Destiny's Song* (Antilles), because unlike his first LP — which sold 70,000 copies incidentally, more than many jazz musicians notch up in a lifetime — it is,

with a couple of exceptions, entirely the work of a quartet, automatically encouraging comparison with Coltrane's classic quartet recordings of the '60s. One of those exceptions, an unaccompanied tenor saxophone ramble around Thelonious Monk's "Round Midnight", escapes from the preoccupation with facility that can afflict even the most gifted performers. Otherwise the best and most original playing occurs when Pine shifts to soprano saxophone, notably in "Alone" (the sleeve incorrectly lists him as playing tenor) and "The Vision".

But is being individual really enough? Sonny Rollins, another of Courtney Pine's heroes, has a bone-hard tone and an akimbo way of phrasing that are unmistakable, even when Rollins does little more than sound like himself. Which is mostly all that happens on *G-Man* (Milestone), tracks recorded in 1986 for the film *Saxophone Colossus* (it turned up last year in Channel 4's jazz series). Rollins will always hit a nerve in the listener at some point during a performance, but here he relies too much upon a relentless prolonging of notes. Even Rollins's hallowed show-stopper, a storming version of "Don't Stop The Carnival", concludes with the saxophonist blowing above applause like a ship's siren from the nearby Hudson River.

Eric Dolphy, only 36 when he died in 1964, seemed destined to be misunderstood. He hit New York at the same moment as Ornette Coleman, but the fact that his stance was less iconoclastic — chord changes still mattered — meant that his innovating got undervalued. And as well as inspiring one of Miles Davis's most embarrassing gaffes ("He plays like somebody was standing on his foot"), Dolphy got labelled — alongside near-contemporaries such as Archie Shepp and Albert Ayler — as an angry young saxophonist. Nevertheless, Dolphy's LP *Other Aspects* (Blue Note), made up of previously unissued material from the early '60s, does contain tigerish playing in a duet between Dolphy's alto saxophone and Ron Carter's bass. Elsewhere Dolphy sticks to flute most of the time, displaying in the course of two unaccompanied solos a kind of serenity that is not intrinsic to the instrument. The oddity is "Jim Crow", 15 minutes long, with an anonymous singer who could easily double-up on a Britten song-cycle.

That originality has little to do with becoming famous is demonstrated by the career of Von Freeman, who has spent 40-odd years playing the tenor saxophone in and around Chicago yet has made only four LPs under his own leadership. One of those, *Young and Foolish* (Affinity) was recorded in Holland in 1977 when Freeman was 55. Supported by a pianist, a bassist and a drummer, Freeman shows how to deploy a style that can genuflect to Hawkins or Lester Young but also take off in forays that soar with the kind of logic Ornette Coleman brought to jazz, untethered but coherent. One of Freeman's strengths is his command of timbres; another is a capacity to swing with a beguiling honesty; thirdly there is his ability to build a solo, chorus by chorus, developing it rather as a composer does. All come together in the 25-minute exploration of a one-time pop song, "I'll Close My Eyes". Neither egotistical nor imitative, this is the work of a musician who celebrates the virtues of the saxophone. □

TREASURE

Life in death

Rob Edwards

Gold of the Pharaohs

City of Edinburgh Arts Centre, to 30 April

THE THINGS PEOPLE DO to try and defeat death are extraordinary. Pharaoh Psusennes I, for example, was mummified, masked with gold and placed in a silver coffin inside a black granite sarcophagus inside a large pink granite chest behind massive granite doors in an underground burial chamber. In order to ensure a divine and contented after-life, his corpse was adorned with 30 rings, 22 bracelets, six huge jewelled pendants, two ankle bands and countless amulets. All his fingers and toes were encased in specially moulded gold sheaths designed to provide digital protection for eternity.

Psusennes probably did not find his posthumous existence to be quite what he expected, but he won himself immortality of a sort: nearly 3,000 years after he was buried he is creating a stir in Scotland. His face, idealised, placid and pure gold, is the centrepiece of an exciting and exclusive exhibition of treasures from the ancient Egyptian city of Tanis which opened in Edinburgh at the beginning of the month.

The exhibition, which features much of the content of Psusennes' tomb, has been billed as one of the most important to be staged in Britain in the last 20 years. There has certainly not been such interest in ancient Egypt since Tutankhamun's trophies were displayed at the British Museum in London in 1972. Before the end of April, more than a quarter of a million people are expected to have filed through Edinburgh's Arts Centre.

The reason why the Labour-controlled city has been granted such a cultural coup is part luck and part skill. The possibility would not have arisen if Edinburgh's unprecedented 1985 exhibition — the ancient Chinese Warriors currently on show in London — had not been such a success. It might never have been turned into reality were it not for the enthusiasm of the city curator, Herbert Courtts.

Edinburgh District Council, like all the others involved, is now keen to bask in the reflected glory of the Pharaohs' gold. The Labour Group is certainly hoping that the favourable publicity generated will help the party regain control of the council in the local elections in May, despite a strong challenge from the Tories — who tend to regard Scotland's capital city as their rightful inheritance. When the Secretary of State for Scotland, Edinburgh MP Malcolm Rifkind, attended the opening ceremony (where he was not invited to speak), he wandered around looking rather glum.

In other circles the exhibition is seen as another shot in the escalating battle for cultural superiority between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Edinburgh has never really forgiven Glasgow for opening the Burrell Gallery and pushing the capital city off the top of the Scottish league of tourist attractions. Some Edinburghers have been further piqued by

the nomination of Glasgow as "European City of Culture" for 1990. The mammoth Glasgow Garden Festival opening at the end of April even provoked one Edinburgh councillor to suggest privately that, while Edinburgh had the culture, Glasgow could offer only horticulture.

This is palapably unfair. On the day that the Egyptian exhibition was opened, Glasgow announced that the Garden Festival would be accompanied by an arts festival featuring, amongst much else, the only performances in Britain of Peter Brook's nine-hour version of *Mahabharata*, a 5,000-year-old Sanskrit epic. In recent years both cities have had remarkable success in staging genuinely popular cultural events alongside those of a more esoteric interest as part of a deliberate and thought-out arts policy. The beneficiaries are the millions of us within easy reach of both places. □

TELEVISION

Lighting up time

Hugo Williams

THOUGH IT HARDLY comes as a surprise, a detailed study *Death of the Working Classes* on *Horizon* (BBC2 Mon. and Sun.) showed that people in Class 5 (unskilled manual workers) are twice as likely to become ill and die before their time as professional people in Class 1, particularly if they live in the North. Class 5 children are four times more likely to suffer from accidents due to poor environment. The statistics for cancer, ulcers, strokes and heart disease all show a widening likelihood gap between rich and poor. Only one statistic reverses the trend — the incidence of malignant melanoma from too much holiday sunshine.

The film's conclusions were based on "occupational mortality"(!). The trouble is that in order to classify people under occupation it is necessary for them to have one and, as we know, many don't. These include children, the old, the unemployed and some women — all high-risk groups, which suggests the reality may be even worse. The effects of unemployment stress in particular are only just being realised. "We thought that after 40 years of the NHS there might have been a narrowing of the health gap, but the reverse seems to be true." Why?

One possibility — of which everyone is very wary — seems to be that there may be a genetic basis for the differences between social classes. There are, for instance, more people with blood group A in Class 1, more with O in Class 5. (There are other reasons which I didn't entirely follow.) It is also the case that the health of women damaged during the industrial revolution is still being passed on to descendants 150 years later. Many of the most damaging habits come from deep-seated cultural concepts that cannot be changed overnight. However, the film suggested there may be long-term emotional benefits from habits like smoking, which can contribute to family welfare at the expense of individual life expectancy by releasing supplies of emotional energy. "No worries when you've got a tab on," laughed a hard-pressed wife. In a life denuded of luxury,

lighting up may be the only thing she does exclusively for herself. Such psycho-social factors insure the wealth gap goes on being the health gap.

In *Bombin'* (C4 Thurs.) we followed a tour of the Midlands by black New York graffiti artist "Brim", filmed talking to unemployed youngsters about such matters as hip-hop, cricket, mouth rapping and the Establishment. "I don't care about England's kings and queens," said a black youth, "I'm interested in the history of Africa and Jamaica." The American wanted to agree with him. "I can't relate to no ballet. I don't want to hear no Elton John. I wanna hear Grandmaster Flash." His taste seemed unexceptionable.

Brim's own graffiti-type lettering has received massive approval in New York. "Instead of characters he's using letters," explained a white pundit. "Some people think that the letter is going to take the place of the figure in the art of the next century." I knocked this out as my own opinion at a dinner party recently and got back reels of sarcastic glee from everyone present, which I secretly shared. "Eventually people will realise you can't look at blank walls forever", said a Brummy Brim-admirer, but surely they have more staying power than the anxiously multiracial community-arts conglomerations we were asked to admire, hacking at the eye from these Handsworth street-ends.

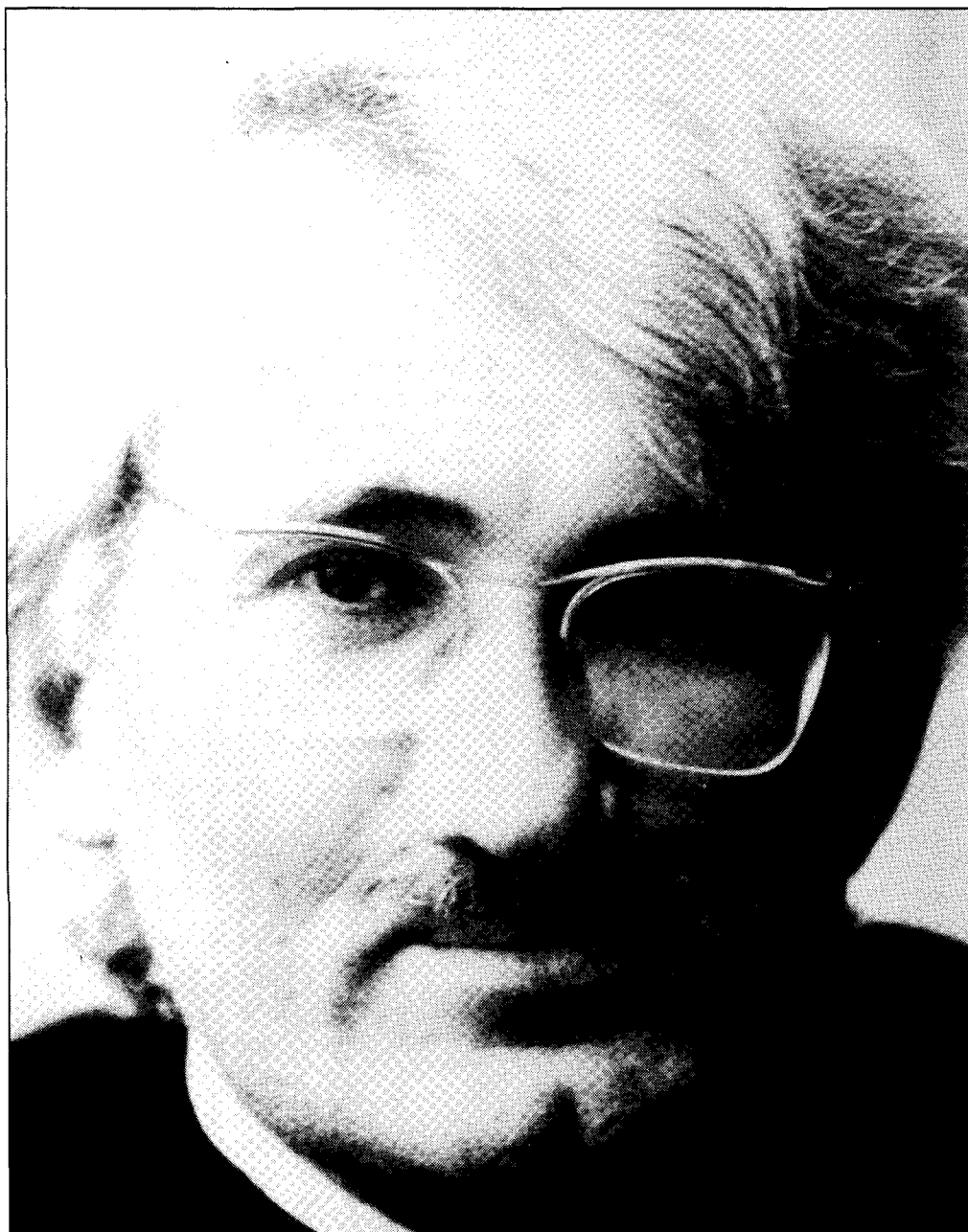
"If we don't find the party soon, I'm going home, man," said Brim. The rap party sought was luckily raided by the police. "Excuse me, are you a community cop?" Yes. "Then why don't you communicate?" Brim: "This is South Bronx, man. You can't beat the system because you ain't part of the system." Was he advising them to get themselves a fashionable So-Ho gallery and travel the world, like himself?

At last I know that "riding the blinds" meant hopping the windowless baggage cars on the trains going down to New Orleans at the turn of the century. According to blues archivist Paul Oliver, on *The South Bank Boogie-Woogie Show* (ITV Sun.), these cars had pianos in them and there was dancing to a form of black music which owed something to ragtime and something to the sounds of the trains. By the '20s the Big Three of boogie-woogie piano were Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis. But William Turk was said to have "a left hand like God". A Godlike left hand was essential to these early practitioners because they sometimes had to play 8-hour stints in the brothels or "barrelhouses" of Louisiana logging camps and needed to keep the dancing going while they grabbed a bite with their right.

The first half of the show delivered some classic footage of Ammons and Johnson pumping out "Triple Train Blues", their smarmed hair gleaming in unison. I was grateful for the programme, but as so often with surveys of this kind, the second half, the modern bit with its round-up of remnants and enthusiasts, proved less satisfying.

Melvyn Bragg had assembled a pair of latterday virtuosos of boogie-woogie piano and given them a rhythm section which included Charlie Watts, either bored or in ecstasy. But the studio set-up made it seem sterile compared to the last little clip of Meade Lux Lewis in his old age, even if he was committing the "cardinal sin of playing too fast and rushing his effects". □

Books



The revival of reason

In which STEPHEN HOWE watches a German philosopher sternly reprimand numerous frivolous Frenchmen, deplore their conservatism, irrationalism and habit of cheating at cards, and give three cheers for European supranationality...

POSTMODERNISM is the most modish, most debated idea now in both popular and avant-garde arts. In the same circles, probably the most influential — most-quoted if not necessarily most-read — contemporary theorists are Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. Martin Heidegger and

Friedrich Nietzsche are the most often resurrected of our philosophical ancestors, walking abroad in the most surprising places. Meanwhile, among rather different audiences (philosophers and social theorists rather than artists and critics, probably an older and seemingly a drier party) maybe the most respected, most discussed living writer is Jürgen Habermas. Not yet 60, he is already the subject of at least six book-length critical studies in English alone; an old master in his own lifetime.

A book welding together the subjects of so many superlatives, in which Habermas brings the massive weight of his erudition crashing down on postmodernism, leaving Heidegger and Nietzsche, Derrida and Foucault smeared on his

juggernaut's tyres, has obvious erotic appeal for the theorising classes. **The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity** (trans. Frederick Lawrence, Polity, £25) fulfils those expectations of intellectual high drama. It does so completely enough to survive the handicaps of Habermas' notoriously dense style (not helped here by his translator's tendency to English rather than translate the more ponderous Germanisms) or of irritation that the book is only available in Britain almost three years after its German publication.

Habermas mounts a sustained assault on the new irrationalism of post-modernist and post-structuralist thought. He sees it as having taken two main routes, both deriving from Nietzsche: that of the "sceptical scholar" seeking to reveal the will to power hidden behind the claims of western reason (Bataille, Foucault, Lacan), and that of the "initiate-critic of metaphysics" claiming to unmask the fictions of subjectivity (Heidegger, Derrida). Nietzsche was himself the product of a wrong turning at the crossroads signposted by Hegel. We remain at that crossroads, remain contemporaries of the Young Hegelians who first problematised the idea of modernity, says Habermas. Despite successive generations' attempts to overtrump their precursors, the real choices remain the political ones posed in the argument between left and right Hegelians, the "party of movement" and that of inertia.

Those who after Nietzsche sought to "pull the rug out from under the radicals and the neoconservatives alike" by ever more radical assaults on the notions of subjectivity, rationality and universalism, have formed a vast philosophical blind alley. The project of modernity remains to be completed, its promise as yet unfulfilled. Those who proclaim its death desert — indeed deny, in ever wilder rhetorical gestures, the very existence of — the only ground on which a progressive politics can be built. They are all the more dangerous when they themselves parade spurious radical credentials. For Habermas, the theorists of postmodernism have close if rarely acknowledged affinities with the more mundanely-grounded irrationalisms of the New Right. To eschew grand narratives and claims to universal reason, far from cutting the umbilical cord between totalising thought and totalitarian politics (as Foucault, most powerfully, has proclaimed), is to open the way to a politics of unreason. At best, it disarms us against the ever-wider encroachments on our lives of systematised power. At worst, it is complicit with them. As Bob Dylan might have said, the postmodernists accept chaos, but it is not chaos which accepts them. Rather it is a highly systematic, bureaucratised rationality of power. Programmes for the militarisation of space are, in Habermas' terms, a hideous caricature of the Enlightenment association of happiness and reason with power.

Heidegger's honeymoon or Paul de Man's more recently revealed flirtation with Nazism, on this view, are far from accidental: though Habermas is too relentlessly *polite* a critic to put the point quite so sharply. His excursus on Heidegger's politics is all the more devastating for trying throughout to give its subject the benefit of every possible doubt.

By courtesy of Verso

More generally, Habermas is scrupulous in acknowledging the strengths of his opponents' positions, and mounting his critique against these strong points rather than gleefully fastening on the obvious weaknesses. As Richard Rorty, who has himself sought with great skill to occupy the middle ground in these disputes, notes, it is rare indeed for a major thinker to engage with his philosophical adversaries on quite so high a level as this.

And Habermas acknowledges that the posties are right on one very important point. The philosophy of subjectivity, whether founding its claims on individual reflection or, as in the Marxist version, on collective productive activity, is exhausted. We cannot replace it, though, by abandoning its aspirations and simply leaping out of the discourse of modernity. Instead we must, Habermas suggests, substitute an alternative model of *intersubjectivity* — founding our social understanding and political hopes neither on reflection nor production but on communication. The good society is that in which communicative rationality is as generalised and as undistorted as possible.

The arguments engaged with here have a more than topical, wider than academic, resonance. The *political* implications of dispute over postmodernism have so far created little disturbance in Britain. The local discussion has been mostly about aesthetics — *pace* a few bold spirits like Zygmunt Bauman and Peter Dews. The aesthetic of postmodernism seeks to collapse distinctions between mass and high cultures. There are fragmentary signs of a parallel collapse in theoretical discourses (paradoxically so, when fashionable theorists are self-consciously inaccessible as never before). That's good, if it means expanding the bounds of what one can be serious about. It's miserable when, instead, it implies that the love of rhetoric, spurning even the pretence of reason, need never fear to speak its name.

In Germany, Habermas can engage in newspaper disputes about the politics of history-writing — castigating the new apologetics for Nazism surfacing in West German historiography — at the same high level of seriousness with which he discusses Gadamer or Hegel. How very different, shamefully different, from the home life of our own dear Stones and Scrutons, whose shaky eminence in one scholarly field seemingly provides licence to make of the entire cultural and political world a benighted freefire zone. □

SEXUAL POLITICS

Volunteer army

Mary McIntosh

The Social Construction of Lesbianism
CELIA KITZINGER Sage £22 & £8.95

IT IS A MIXED blessing for Celia Kitzinger that her book has appeared at a time when lesbianism is an issue in parliamentary politics. For although *The Social Construction of Lesbianism* is very political — as well as being very scholarly, in the

French lessons

1967

Peter Norman

As the ferry backed into the Solent we swarmed over its white decks, swaggering in hipster jeans, sniffing the brisk channel air expectantly.

Darkness revealed the strung jewels of Le Havre; above a grey rush of swell I peered through billowing hair, snogging my way towards France.

In the chill dawn we were hustled across the Pont de Tancarville to Honfleur, pitching our ragged tents by the sad boom of the lighthouse.

We bought bread and souvenirs, glugged wine from starred bottles, mootched the deserted promenades of the windy twins, Trouville and Deauville.

In the blue dark of the Nautilus Cafe we scorched our tongues on Calvados whilst James Brown sobbed on the jukebox: *It's a Man's, Man's, Man's, Man's World*.

best and worst senses of the word — the debate from which it emerges is a million miles from *Jenny Lives with Martin and Eric* or from Clause 28 of the Local Government Bill.

Kitzinger's main political project is to distinguish radical feminism from liberal humanist approaches to lesbianism and radical feminist research from "gay affirmative" research in psychology.

The liberal approach, which sees gay lifestyles as alternatives to heterosexuality that are equally valid, was developed from the late '60s on to challenge dominant theories of homosexuality as a disease. But, according to Kitzinger, this depoliticises lesbianism by seeing it as an individual choice of lifestyle in a search for sexual and personal fulfilment and by portraying lesbians as being just like heterosexual women in other respects. Radical feminism, she says, rejects such personalised interpretations and sees both heterosexuality and lesbianism as political constructions, the former as one into which women are coerced, the latter as "a political challenge to the patriarchy".

She is well aware that only a few lesbians would share this view. Her own research, reported in three substantial chapters of the book, is concerned precisely to explore different accounts of lesbian identity, different views on lesbian politics and different clusters of homophobic opinion among heterosexuals. She used an elaborate technique, called Q methodology or operant subjectivity, involving a computer analysis of the way in which sets of cards with opinion statements on them are sorted by participants in the study. This produced a series of clusters of opinions, confusingly called Factors, and her discussion of them shows how most of them reflect various versions of individualising liberal humanism or even self-hatred and anti-feminism. Radical feminism is only one account

among many.

For Kitzinger this is not a problem, because she adopts the view that there is no hierarchy of knowledge. It is common enough for radical feminists to claim that (male) scientific knowledge is not superior to (female) participants' knowledge and to argue for a methodology that reports as carefully as possible what women themselves say about their experiences. But Kitzinger adds a further twist to this by giving no more respect to other women's views than to her own. Indeed, it could be said that she elicits other women's accounts only to trash them as politically unsound. In the end, I wonder why she bothered with the fancy research methods.

Her interviews and her "Q sorts" also involve individualising in a way that belies her stated anti-individualism. She could have produced the same analysis using written sources, which are public and collective — indeed, she draws a good deal on these in any case.

This book will be read as confirming the worst fears of the moral right. It favours an image of lesbianism as a choice, as political and as a threat to patriarchy. One woman is quoted approvingly: "I felt different from that woman who seemed to think that her sister was definitely heterosexual and she was a lesbian, as if . . . you know, as if women *are* heterosexual or lesbian."

It is true that playing the "sickness" card, claiming that homosexuals cannot help what they are, is a way of buying toleration at the expense of self-respect. But Kitzinger's "constructionist" theory goes to the other extreme of complete voluntarism. Lesbianism is seen as a political construction, not a social one. She denies the past 20 years of work on the social construction of sexuality, which has shown that it is neither innate nor freely chosen.

In fact, as a psychologist, she appears to be utterly ignorant of most of the writing in history and sociology. This has shown that "the lesbian" and "the homosexual" are fairly recent social constructs and that in earlier ages sexual activities did not define a whole lifestyle and personality in the way that they do now. Nevertheless, such constructs have immense social power and much of sexuality is now organised around them. A teenage girl who is mainly attracted to other women cannot be said to have a choice as to whether to become a lesbian or a heterosexual. Without support and without any positive images she may become self-hating or denying; with them she may become relatively self-fulfilled. But nowadays it would be very hard for her to combine such feelings for women with a happy marriage and family life, as a 19th-century bourgeois woman was able to do.

The history of sexuality has shown that the idea of the male homosexual and of the lesbian developed along parallel lines, so it is wrong to present lesbianism as though it were completely different. The social construction is in part forced upon us by an opposition that sees them as being similar and equally bad. The current moral crusade does not distinguish the two, so lesbians need to unite with gay men in resisting it. The backlash against gay liberation is now so strong that the battle between liberal and radical feminists, which dominated the '70s and early '80s and which Kitzinger is still fighting, seems like a luxury. □

FICTION

The far-right stuff

George Black

The Bonfire of the Vanities

TOM WOLFE *Cape* £12.95

MANHATTAN is an island. Its links to the four outlying boroughs of New York City, unlike the modest, pretty bridges that cross the Thames, are formidable: the great suspension span of the George Washington, the swooping eight-lane racetrack of the Triboro, the architectural extravaganza of the 100-year-old Brooklyn Bridge, and the great booming tunnels of steel girders, terrifyingly enclosed, that carry north-bound traffic off Manhattan Island.

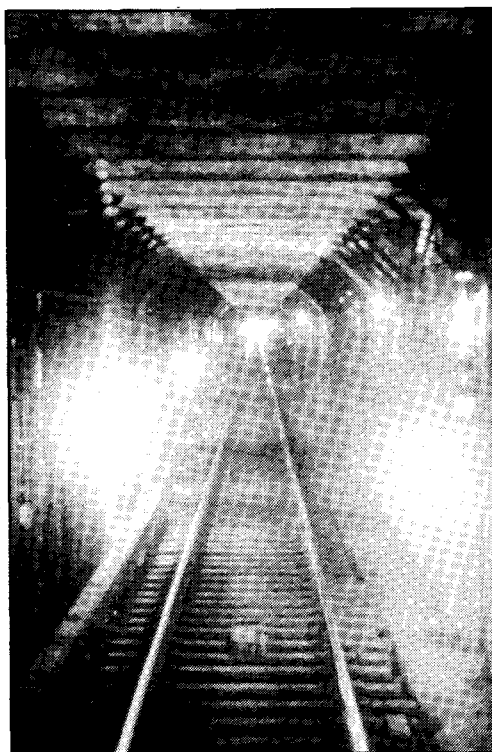
There are four outer boroughs: in Staten Island, which you can also reach by a ferry that only costs a quarter, there are still rumoured to be working Dutch barns; Queen's, to the east, looks like Wimbledon, but if you superimposed it on the map of London it would reach from Shepherds Bush to Croydon. That leaves Brooklyn, where fancy riverfront terraces give way to the remnants of old Italian and Jewish neighbourhoods and the devastation of the Bedford-Stuyvesant housing project. And, to the north, the Bronx.

Manhattan's relationship to the Bronx is much more a psychological than a physical one. When New Yorkers speak of Manhattan as an island fortress, they're usually thinking of the Bronx. This is the terrain on which Tom Wolfe's new novel is played out. Sherman McCoy, a wealthy 38-year-old, Yale-educated gun-trader picks up his raunchy Southern mistress, Maria, at Kennedy Airport to drive her back to their East Side love-nest. Coming into Manhattan, they lose themselves in a tangle of expressways. It happened to me once when I first came to New York, driving in from upstate, missing an exit sign, then the sudden unnerving sense of heading in completely the wrong direction, ending up in deadend parking lots in the shadow of monstrous high rises.

For Sherman and Maria, the event is not a petty annoyance but the beginning of a nightmare. Heading up the ramp to yet another expressway, they stop to remove an obstruction from their car. Two black youths appear out of nowhere. A robbery attempt? They don't wait to find out. Maria swerves away, hits one of the youths, drives off. The kid is left with head injuries; the next we hear of him, he is in hospital in a coma.

That basic setup could be taken in a number of directions. Tom Wolfe has the *chutzpah*, to put it generously, to make Sherman the victim of events. So for the next 600 pages he is dragged down into a convoluted series of spider's webs, in which he falls prey successively to (a) the Jewish legal system and political establishment; (b) Irish cops; (c) the demagogic and corrupt leadership of the black community; and (d) the tabloid press, whose villains, since Wolfe has pretty well run out of other racist stereotypes by this point, are English.

It's a set piece for cartoon characters. Wolfe's linguistic fireworks are as wearisome here as they have ever been, turning all his characters into one-



Watch out Bronx: a fearless white novelist is crossing to the wrong side of the tracks

line jokes, endlessly repeated. Maria, for example, is a sex-kitten with a Southern accent. Whenever she opens her mouth, Wolfe gives out what she says in plain English, and then in a South Carolina transliteration. She calls McCoy "Shuhmun". *Ad nauseam*. Kramer, the harried Assistant District Attorney out of Columbia Law School has an inferiority complex and views the drama of life as *The Jews Confront the Goyim*. The lower end of the legal bureaucracy is inhabited by types like Killian, the Irish criminal lawyer, whose particular line is to greet McCoy with a cry of "Ayyyyyy, whaddaya, whaddaya" each time he appears in a scene. These verbal tics are funny once, irritating twice, cardboard by the third and subsequent times.

The worst indignities are heaped upon the blacks. Most of them grunt rather than talk, unless they are being coached by Jewish prosecutors to give tainted evidence in exchange for getting off drugs charges. Wolfe tells us the underclass comes in three categories: first, "a round-the-clock shift of Irishmen from Queens and Puerto Ricans from the Bronx" who earn "\$200,000 a year to run the elevators". Second, the local religious-political leaders (the book's Jesse Jackson clone is called the Reverend Bacon) whose followers call Jews "Hymie" and belong to organisations with names out of Peter Simple: All People's Solidarity, the Open Gates Employment Coalition and the Third World Anti-Defamation League. Then there's the seething deviant mass that inhabits the Bronx, where each year the cops arrest "forty thousand incompetents, dimwits, alcoholics, psychopaths, knockabouts", for a daily succession of "the same stupid, dismal, pathetic, horrifying crimes".

Wolfe does, I suppose, practise his own kind of misanthropic evenhandedness. He devotes a couple of passages to the inanities of *nouveaux riches* Park Avenue hostesses and their appalling, over-orchestrated dinner parties. Fine; they're a

cheap, easy target. And Sherman himself is an ass, with his junk-bond trading and asinine activity. Yet, though he may be a butt of satire, may be socially useless, in Wolfe's cosmology the making of quick Wall Street fortunes is pumped by adrenalin. Sherman is On The Bus, in his own phrase a Master of the Universe, and that puts him, in the end, in the same universe as the pilots and astronauts in *The Right Stuff*.

Sherman's downfall is played as tragedy, a parable for the benefit of prosperous Manhattanites; it confirms and indulges their terrors about the jungle that lies beyond the Harlem River, and leaves them secure in the belief that the real victims of modern New York are the civilised, beleaguered white upper middle class. Wolfe's Bronx is less a place than a symbol, located outside history and socio-economic change. Just as Park Avenue is, and always has been, white and rich, so the Bronx is, and for all practical purposes always has been, a black, alien presence, full of chaos and menace.

But Wolfe's Bronx won't do as a map to reality. Most of the Bronx's black and hispanic underclass are recent migrants who came looking for work at the wrong time, just as the great urban centres of the North East were ceasing to produce goods and moving towards a service economy, wiping out thousands of unskilled jobs. The old factory days of the Bronx died; the tidal marshes of the South Bronx rotted; the borough was overlaid with more and more concrete spaghetti, the unemployed underclass jammed in between in decaying tenements. The sequel is familiar: imprisoned communities and the sociologist's catalogue from petty crime and drugs, from single parenthood and welfare dependency.

After its quasi-academic rationalisations, like Charles Murray's *Losing Ground*, and its emblematic crimes — Howard Beach and Bernhard Goetz, the "subway vigilante" — 1980s-style racism now has its pulp fiction. *Bonfire of the Vanities* is really an upmarket version of Charles Bronson's *Death Wish* movies. I read most of it on the clattering IRT subway line, travelling to and from my office from Fifth Avenue and 13th Street. One train I use, the slow No 1 local, starts off deep in the Bronx at Van Cortlandt Park where West Indian teams play cricket in summertime. Another, the No. 2 express, winds under the Bronx to 241 St and White Plains Road. Four out of five passengers are black or hispanic. You get to recognise some of the faces, especially those of the beggars. There's the Vietnam veteran who moves along the car on a wooden board on castors where he should have legs, and the tall, homeless black man, partially sighted, who stands at the end of the car and makes a little speech. "I know some of you may be alarmed by my appearance," he begins, "and I apologise for that. But I don't mean you no harm." Before he shuffles down the car with a paper cup held out for nickels and dimes, he says, "Thank you all, God bless you, have a safe journey home and a pleasant evening." Reading Tom Wolfe in that setting felt like a contamination. Perhaps on the London Tube, travelling on the Victoria Line between Brixton and King's Cross, it may not seem so bad. □

George Black is Associate Editor of The Nation in New York.

CRIME

War of the sexes

Nick Kimberley

ONE OF THE GREAT virtues of pulp fiction is that you so often *can* tell a book by its cover: the hit-and-run mechanisms of cheapskate marketing hit their target. The 1950s paperback edition of Jim Thompson's *Recoil*, for instance, shows a glamorous woman's head towering over the tiny figure of a fleeing man. Above her head are the words, "Her proposition was simple: be a con with a number — or a corpse with a name!"

It's not that this relates specifically to the plot of *Recoil* — which has just been reprinted (Corgi, £2.95) — but the no-win option offered by the phantom woman is one that, figuratively, confronts most Thompson heroes. The blunt assault of the sales pitch has it right. By contrast, the witty pastiche cover of the reprint, aimed at a knowing reader, derives from an all-purpose *noir* fantasy that has more to do with '40s film than Thompson's fiction.

Still, the new edition — the first in a series of Thompson reprints — is welcome. Its appearance coincides with publication of *Crime and Detective Stories No 7*, edited by Geoff Bradley (£3.25 inc p&p from G. H. Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA), which includes R. A. Kleinert's essay, *Jim Thompson: The Function of Madness*. Also recently available as imports are two omnibus editions, each containing three Thompson novels, *Hardcore* and *More Hardcore* (Donald I. Fine Inc, \$17.95 & \$18.95 respectively).

Serious criticism, hardback publication, stylish packaging: not what Thompson was used to.

Jim Thompson (1906-76) published 29 novels during his lifetime (*More Hardcore* brings his tally to 30 with the posthumous publication of *The Rip-Off*). Their publishers had few ambitions beyond the quick buck; most were never reprinted. Many seem to have been written in a rush (a dozen were published 1952-54), and they included several examples of that most disposable genre, the film/TV tie-in (novelisations of *Ironside*, *The Undeclared*, *Nothing but a Man*). But Thompson took his writing seriously; in best auteurist fashion, his work does indeed produce a coherent — which is not to say balanced — vision. Which brings us back to the synopsis proposed by *Recoil*'s original cover. For what Thompson dramatised most effectively was the clash (invariably observed from a man's point of view) between male and female: the battle of the sexes conducted in mortal hand-to-hand combat.

The Thompson hero is prodded into action by forceful women whose demands have catastrophic effects. Manhood has become a shaky edifice, bits flying off in every direction. As opposed to Mickey Spillane's fiction, for example, where only the reader's intervention can call into question the author's prejudices, Thompson deliberately sows the seeds of his own destruction. He knows his sad sack heroes are involved in ritual self-dismemberment.

It's a shame that *Recoil* is far from Thompson's best. Its story — gullible Pat Cosgrove, fresh from prison, falls victim to small-town corruption — is not untypical, but it's set down with unusual sobriety. It has its moments: in Commissioner Myrtle Briscoe, Thompson presents an abrasive virago whose insight and decisiveness are all that save Cosgrove. It's no coincidence, either, that Cosgrove worked in the prison library: this gives Thompson the chance to list writers whose company he might like to join (Shakespeare, Swift, Marx, Verne...). The narrative constructs a sequence of encounters designed to set Cosgrove up as a poor sap led to the edge of destruction by his unchained libido. But there are few signs of what Kleinert identifies in his article in *Crime and Detective Stories* as Thompson's "ambiguity toward the world, and the madness which this ambiguity must logically imply".

For that we turn to *The Nothing Man* in *Hardcore*, written, like Thompson's most unsettling work, in the first person. Its opening paragraph establishes narrator Clinton Brown as an outsider unable to share everyday pleasures. He quickly tells us why: in the army, his superior officer sent him into a minefield where his genital apparatus was blasted into redundancy. No halfway measures here, no merely *symbolic* castrations. Clinton still has an eye for the women but, deprived of normal equipment, can only respond with murder.

Even this provides no answers, only questions: when he smashes his substitute phallus (a booze bottle) over his wife's head, "I stood looking down at her... She lay twitching a bit and moaning, with her head and shoulders slumping toward her knees, her thighs in a tangent curve to her legs. A question mark. She was a question, and she had to be answered." Brief quotes only suggest the flavour, but there is something shocking here that goes beyond mere explicitness. Dead women

who "asked for it" litter the battlefields of crime fiction, but that's not Thompson's game. It's his men who ask for it, and dish it out to themselves.

The cod psychologist in us all will feast on the autobiographical *Roughneck* (in *More Hardcore*). This Depression memoir displays Thompson's usual social sympathies and is made up of a sprawling sequence of trivial encounters such as we find in *Recoil*. But most intriguing is the revelation that Thompson sold his first novel in order to pay for a rest cure for his ailing father — he didn't complete the novel in time, and his father died. That Oedipal failure resonates throughout his work. In *The Nothing Man*, Clinton is now working with the army superior responsible for his genital disaster. To begin with, he ironically calls him Colonel; by the end of the novel, he's calling him Father...

Gaudy, cheap psychology? That's Thompson's world. If we put aside the tired refinement of conventional fiction, Thompson's lapel-grabbing address offers a salutary vision. □

The omnibus volumes published by Donald I. Fine are available through Compendium Bookshop, 234 Camden High St, London NW1.

SURVIVAL

This is it

Jane Dibblin

The Little School

ALICIA PARTNOY *Virago* £3.95

THE BLOWS of the guards "almost don't hurt" when Alicia's wearing Vasca's denim jacket. She is protected not by the fabric but by the magic of Vasca's courage — Vasca, whom they have taken away to kill.

Alicia Partnoy and Zulma "Vasca" Aracelli Izurieta were among the 30,000 Argentinians to "disappear" between 1976 and 1979, the most vicious years of military rule. They were both held prisoner in an old building known as "the little school" on the outskirts of Bahía Blanca.

On 12 April 1977, after four months in captivity, 24-year-old Vasca and another prisoner, María Elena Romero, aged 17, were made to bathe and for the first time allowed to wear their own clothing and jewelry. They were told they were being transferred to jail and taken from the cell they shared with Alicia. The same night Alicia overheard the guards joking as they gave anesthetic injections to two prisoners: César Antonio "Braco" Giordiano, aged 18, and Gustavo Marcelo "Benja" Yoti, aged 17, the *compañeros* of Vasca and María Elena respectively. The following day, Alicia was later to discover, *La Nueva Provincia*, the regional daily newspaper, reported that the two couples had been shot and killed in a "confrontation" with military forces.

Alicia was one of the very few *desaparecidos* to be released, in part due to international pressure. She wrote this book to honour and remember all those who never re-emerged alive from the dark rooms of the little school. She doesn't try to speculate on the psyche of her captors but remains

They say that time heals all wounds,
but death leaves a lingering scar...

RUTH RENDELL

writing as

BARBARA VINE

A Fatal Inversion

'No one horrifies
as can Ruth Rendell...
truly devastating'
— *Listener*

£3.50

PENGUIN BOOKS



faithful to her fragmented glimpses of the rituals of imprisonment as she lies blindfolded and tied up on an iron bed.

It is a slender volume: a small collection of brief anecdotes, treasured stones which suddenly flash and reveal layers and depths. Each one contains a tiny clue to the prisoners' ability to withstand beatings, torture and death threats: imbuing a shabby denim jacket with magic properties; hoarding up mouthfuls of bread to pass between toes to other prisoners; making the most of the drops of water from a leaking roof to smell the outside world, dampen dry tongues and soften dirt caked on hands . . .

Jean Anouilh's *Antigone* argues that it is better to die than to surrender a vision; she scorns the old King who says that moments of companionship and small pleasures are what makes life worth living. Alicia and her cell-mates are willing to embrace both approaches: they weren't intimidated into ceasing their political activity by the disappearances of friends and the spectre of their own death, but every day that they remained alive in the little school they honoured life itself by savouring each moment of contact with another prisoner, each opportunity for humour, warmth or irony.

The importance of Alicia's book lies not simply in its detailed recording of lives otherwise rubbed out, or the light it casts on Argentinian recent history. Alicia shows her readers what it might be like to live through their worst nightmares of political repression. Authoritarian regimes keep their stranglehold on power not just by killing and maiming resisters but by other people's fear of what could happen. And, though living in Mrs Thatcher's Britain is, as yet, hardly comparable, there is nevertheless a way in which Britons too are silenced by fear of the most extreme consequences of speaking out. The accounts of Alicia and other political prisoners take us into the cold cave of fear — and show us the other side. Not because they offer any diminishing of the awfulness of it, but simply by saying: this is it, this is what you fear and this is how I and others experienced it. □

DATING

All serious replies

Bill Greenwell

Lonely Hearts: Looking for Love among the Small Ads

JOHN COCKBURN *Simon & Schuster* £9.95

ALMOST AT the outset, John Cockburn slips in a statistic which justifies his beavering away at the world of anonymous box numbers: if you tot up all the lonelyheart ads, you arrive at a good guesstimate of *one and a half million dates a year* arranged through the proxy of print. Whether these were Close Encounters, Passing Fancies, even Highland Flings, we cannot be sure, but Cockburn's certainly picked a growing and notable social phenomenon — and not just for the astonishing income it must generate for pubs and wine bars.

Lonely Hearts is a readable, if excitable,

account of the phenomenon. It's impressively researched, rather haphazardly presented. This latter is not for want of organisation; it's just that the book's divisions seem a bit arbitrary and the separation of its subjects by gender, marital status and sexuality do not seem particularly significant. Its main strength is anecdotal, Cockburn becoming breathlessly empathetic with some of the people he meets. And what they say is often much more revealing than what *he* says, which can degenerate into sentences like: "A fine gold chain fell gently around a fragile wrist, but behind that petite figure lay a forceful personality." Here's a reporter in love — and at first sight, too — with his material.

But credit where it's due: he has persuaded people to talk (as befits a fellow with a Ph.D in "interviewing methods") and the interviewees respond by exploding the more obvious myths: that the ads are never answered, that their authors aren't serious, that writing the ads is a quick and easy pastime. Heartsearchers are sometimes obsessive about how they frame their invitations to the world. Some begin to live in a kind of parallel existence, pouring out and poring over letters and photographs, hopping between fantasy and reality.

One of Cockburn's most extraordinary discoveries is an ad-addict who was "meeting sometimes two men a day for weeks on end and it got so bad that I had to spend Sundays in bed to recover." Many are plainly involved in a serious, emotional version of CB, investing desperate

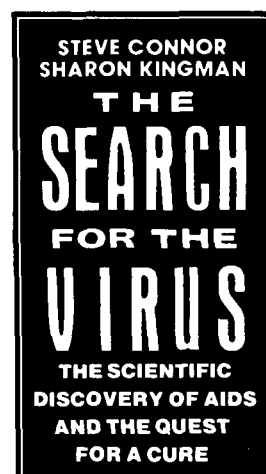
passion, instead of exchanging platitudes and wacky handles. We have here a version of holiday romance, in which one cuts out the flight, the sunshine, the distance, but retains the option for reckless infatuation.

It's not hard to understand why there is a boom in blind dating. What this book reveals is a world where work has come to dominate existence — in its absence as much as its presence. You work too hard. You can't find work. In either case your social life diminishes, your isolation grows, your distaste for the rigmarole of the chat-up increases. Whether you answer ads or place them (there is a tendency to begin with the former before proceeding to the latter), you discover an art to making love which contemporary social networks preclude.

Lonely Hearts left me with contradictory feelings: one a rather predictable pity for those with an Eleanor Rigby complex; another a surge of optimism that the loveless and lovelorn had discovered a way to channel their emotion, even to regain their self-esteem. But what Cockburn never says, and yet what seems repeatedly to transpire from his investigations, is that very few of the relationships work out for more than a couple of months. Cockburn writes as light-heartedly about it as he can but I was left with memories of Jimmy Ruffin's melancholy song "What Becomes Of The Broken-Hearted?". Well, some of them advertise again, and I for one won't laugh at their efforts any more. Should my world ever implode, I'd even be tempted to try myself. □

AIDS

How long before science finds the answer?



Two leading *New Scientist* journalists tell the detailed, gripping story of the scientific discovery of **AIDS** and the quest for a cure.

£3.95

A Penguin Original



Learning from gay men

Simon Watney, *Learning about Aids Project, Bristol Polytechnic*

Dr Michael Fitzpatrick's letter (NS 29 Jan.) concerning Duncan Campbell's article on Aids omitted to point out that he is the co-author, with Don Milligan, of a Junius Press pamphlet giving the Revolutionary Communist Party line about Aids. His comments are also either inaccurate or seriously misleading in no less than seven substantial ways.

First, Campbell was not "grossly exaggerating" the risk of a major epidemic among heterosexuals. It already exists — in Africa, Brazil, and the United States.

Second, he repeats the tired old racist idea that heterosexual intercourse in Africa is different to that in the UK. This delusion may offer some comfort to some people, but it is profoundly dangerous.

Third, in relation to the sexual activities of injecting drug users "among women who have acquired Aids sexually, five times as many have been sexual partners of intravenous drug users as of bisexual men" (*New England Journal of Medicine*, 29 Oct. 1987).

Fourth, he writes of "full-blown Aids". In my experience this phrase is only used by those who fail to understand the natural history of HIV infection, and who ignore the many consequences of HIV *besides* Aids — damage to the central nervous system, Aids-related conditions, etc.

Fifth, he seeks to minimise the risk of HIV infection via heterosexual intercourse. This, however, flies in the face of all the world-wide evidence, summarised by Professor Michael Adler in the observation that "the commonest mode of transmission of the virus throughout the world is by sexual intercourse. Whether this is anal or vaginal is unimportant" (*The ABC of Aids*, BMJ 1987). It also overlooks the time delay between HIV infection and Aids among heterosexuals in Britain, a matter of 3 to 5 years in most cases, which is running several years behind the epidemic among gay men.

Sixth, Dr Fitzpatrick clearly entertains a fantasy world if he thinks that government health policy is unified and coherent. This government's responses to Aids have been uneven and sometimes contradictory, but it could have been far worse.

Lastly, it is callous and epidemiologically grotesque to compare HIV infection with diarrhoeal dehydration in Africa. While the latter is a tragic index of chronic poverty and malnourishment, the former is a viral infection with well-known — and preventable — modes of transmission.

In their RCP pamphlet, Fitzpatrick and Milligan advance the preposterous notion that "It is the oppression of homosexuals that allows HIV infection to spread among gay men" while in the same breath arguing *against* Safer Sex practices, even for gay men, on the extraordinary grounds that it is intrinsically anti-gay. In Britain now it is undoubtedly true that gay men are much more vulnerable to HIV than heterosexuals or lesbians. But this should be no cause for complacency among other social constituencies.

HIV entered the gay community when it was unknown and asymptomatic. It is therefore hardly surprising that it spread. Everything we know about viral infection and the fragility of the boundaries between homosexual and heterosexual behaviour suggests the possibility of a still more catastrophic situation than we currently face. Unless straight people learn from the maturity and experience of gay men, there is every likelihood of a major pandemic among heterosexuals.



Worthy human

George Cowley, *Worcester*

As a 50-year-old ex-mental patient who still occasionally has manic phases, I personally welcome Jeremy Taylor's attempt in the *Horizon* programme "Playing with Madness" to "put a human face" on the "black dog" of insanity (NS 29 Jan.). I was also encouraged to be told in the programme that manic people (eg, Sir Winston Churchill, Virginia Woolf) are people who get things done. Despite my illness, I do quite a lot of voluntary work (both cerebral and physical) and also win the occasional prize in your Weekend and Caption competitions. But I would like to emphasise that in the '60s I went through seven sorts of hell (before I started having Modicate injections) and have five times attempted suicide. People like me *need* the reassurance of family and friends (and *Horizon* programmes) that we are just as human as anyone else.

World peace fund

The Maypole Fund gives small grants (max. £500) to individual women/women's groups with imaginative ideas and projects designed to further *world peace* with justice, nuclear disarmament and international links between women for these purposes. Write a single page to us saying who you are and what you need the money for, enclosing SAE, by 15 March: Box 25, Kingsland High St, London E8 2NS.

Media sensitivity

Sushma Puri, *Producer "Today", BBC*

As an Asian journalist I totally reject Neil Berry's accusations of racism. It seems just because we have done a story that involves the Asian community I am accused of being racist. Our (NS 15 Jan.) story was based on facts painstakingly researched. When it was scripted I went to great lengths to ensure that there was no element of "sensationalism" or racism involved.

We started our report by explaining why people from some cultural groups preferred boys to girls. There is nothing sensational about that. This is fact not fiction and has been the case among certain cultures for centuries. The report then focused on a doctor who was accepting bribes from women to perform the test, another who was offering the test to women on the NHS and finally a doctor performing it privately. The report clearly stated that this is an abuse of medical skills by some doctors. Instead of getting families together and counselling them some doctors are prepared to illegally side-step current practice to make money from these people. We emphasised in the piece that the number of women, for example in the Asian community, who want an amniocentesis and the abortion were small and not at all representative. We also mentioned the successful campaigns some Health Authorities have mounted in attempts to tackle the problem. Your article ignored these essential and careful aspects of our piece and the conclusion you draw is a complete distortion of the nature of our report.

A story involving Asians or ethnic groups should not be swept under the carpet or dismissed. What is important is that the media treat them sensitively. The Asians in this country have a right to know what is happening in their community and the massive response I have received from community organisations, Asian TV and radio programmes who want to follow up the same report entirely endorses this view.

Unlikely alliance

Professor Norman Stone, *Modern History Faculty, Oxford*

I was glad to see that your film-critic shared my low opinion of *Sammy and Rosie* (NS 29 Jan.). However, in her embarrassment at finding an ally in me, she refers to my politics as "far right". That, to me and most other people, would mean "Fascist" — a long way from my own position, which might loosely be called Hayekian-liberal. In general, the left in this country seems to be rather slipshod in its use of the word "Fascist". We are a long way from concentration camps, muzzled press and rigged elections, and I think that we should keep our vocabulary accurate. If Fascism were to arrive here, your film-critic and I would once more, no doubt to her embarrassment, be in alliance.

Judith Williamson replies: It is precisely because I don't use the word "Fascist" loosely that I didn't use it. In his eagerness to recruit me to his cause Professor Stone has also overlooked the fact that my reasons for criticising *Sammy and Rosie* were different from his.

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APPOINTMENTS

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In a major new initiative the TUC is creating an Equal Rights Department which will be responsible for developing and extending the TUC's work on equal rights.

The new department will actively promote equal rights for all workers and positive action for women and members of black and ethnic minority communities. It will service the TUC's Equal Rights Committee, Women's Committee and the Race Relations Advisory Committee.

It is intended that **the Department will be established and operational by September 1988.** After the appointment of the head of the new Department, three other staff will be appointed, **one Assistant Secretary and two Assistants.**

Applications are now invited for the key post of Head of the Equal Rights Department.

Further details and an application form are available from: **the General Secretary, Trades Union Congress, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1** quoting reference **ER2.**

Completed application forms should be received by no later than 26 February.

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Letters of application including two referees and a current CV should be sent to: **Geraldine Reardon, Earth Resources Research Ltd, 258 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JY.**

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For any further information you may contact:
Mr K. Thomas Tel: 01-703 6311 Ext 2324

If your company wishes to be considered for inclusion on the approved list, an application form is available from:

Service Delivery Review Support Group
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Application forms must be returned by **1st March 1988**

Southwark

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Lord Northcliffe Lectures in Literature by Miss Barbara Everett, "Purchasing Experience: A Reading of Four Tragedies. I. Hamlet: 'Growing', II. Othello: 'Mixing', III. King Lear: 'Loving', IV. Macbeth: 'Succeeding', 23, 25 Feb., 1, 3 Mar. at 5.30 pm, Gustave Tuck Theatre. Admission free without ticket. W7.7

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON—The Ethel M. Wood Memorial Lecture entitled: 'Exegesis and Imagination' will be given by Dr Robert Murray, SJ, MA (Oxon), STD (Gregorian University Rome), (Senior Research Fellow at Heythrop College) at the University of London, Senate House (Chancellor's Hall), Malet Street, London WC1 at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 1 March 1988. Admission free without ticket.

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7pm

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WOMAN, 38, one child, lively and independent, with happy life needs kind, sociable, tolerant and preferably tall man, to care and share with. South/West. Box (06)0874. W7 23

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Weekend competition

No 3012

Set by Gray Dorn

London Regional Transport are planning to franchise tube stations to commercial contractors or — in the case of unpopular ones — to voluntary groups. No, really, I read it in the *Observer*. How might John Betjeman have described the results? Sixteen lines maximum, by Wednesday 24 Feb.

No 3009

Set by E. O. Parrott

Explanations in verse for the recent discovery, on a Pennine pathway, of a coffin lined with pink plush containing a take-away Indian meal, Co-op stamps and computer tape.

Report

By Gray Dorn

A popular one, this, by our standards: 34 entries, nothing obscene and only a single — how can I put it? — *strange* one. Liza Rymer of Moortown, Leeds, wants to know the truth about the curry-eating vampire, since the mystery is preventing her sleeping. Well, Liza, if that's *all* you've got to worry about, in *Leeds*, count your blessings — as to the truth, I've no idea, but I suspect Basil Ransome-Davies gets closest. What worries me is why even on a good week we only get 34 entries (because ABC figures *prove* we have more than 34 readers). What about the rest of you? Don't forget there are £££s to be won, every single week. This

week's lucky winners get £12 each — nearly *half* the weekly income of an unemployed single person! Don't just envy them, join them!

Not a disc we had, not a programming note,
As the tapes to the Amstrad we hurried;

Not a comrade disclosed the stairwell spot
O'er the dive where our dinner was curried.

We stared at it darkly at dead of night,
The knobs with our bare thumbs turning;
But it read not a line, and we raised not a byte —
And we bitterly thought to its burning.

Some useful coffin to hide the pest
From the Funeral Co-op we'd borrow;
On the moor we'd inter it, and as for the rest —
We could fetch them away on the morrow.

GAVIN J. S. ROSS

There's a little Polytechnic just to t'North o'
Ramsden's Mill,

An' a few on us in Rag Week said we'd take
A coffin ower t'old corpse road to t'Tech in Boggart
Gill;

'Twere meant to be a sort o' sponsored wake.

Well, t'Co-op donated t'coffin — threw some divi
stamps in, too —

An' t'Rajah give us summat for us eatin's;
An' t' lads in t'lab 'ad coded up a message, with a view
To conveyin' 'i-tech best fraternal greetin's.

But t'wind began to moan, an' we fancied it were
t'sperrits

Of all t'corpses that'd passed up there by t'Cairn,
So we dumped the lot on t'Clough, an' come down like
bloody ferrets,
An' if anybody wants it — well it's they'rn.

NOEL PETTY

Ah got Minnie Sykes's coffin on to t'wagon
And remembered that Ah 'ad to go to t'shop,
To pick oop 'alf o' bacon for the Missus,
So Ah pulled the wagon oop ahtside the C'op.

Ah pocketed the bacon; bought a curry
From Fred Sharma's Takeaway along the Street —
Fred tied it oop wi' this 'ere shiny tape stuff,
And Ah tucked it into t'box, to keep its 'eat.

Then Ah took the little road across the Moss theer,
Which got so steep beside the Lamb's Clough Ramps
That the wagon slipped its load, and Ah can't find it!
Ay, t'Missus got 'er bacon, but no stamps!

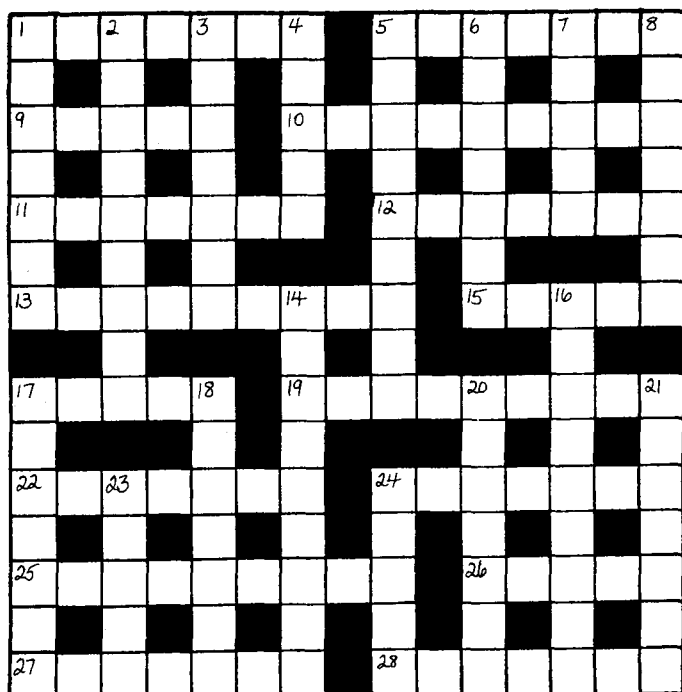
ERIC SWAINSON

By the shores of Little Venice,
On a boat of Dutch construction,
Dwelt the mighty Eric Parrott,
Setter of the Competitions.
When imagination failed him —
He, whose mind was ever fertile! —
He addressed a scheming letter
To a friend in farthest Yorkshire,
Saying, 'Place some random objects
Where no one expects to find them.'
Thus he fooled *New Statesman* readers.
Thus he kept his reputation.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Weekend Crossword 1585

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1585, New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, by first post 23 February.



ACROSS

- Place for filthy water makes the rubbish dumps dry in return (7)
- The tally found in the valley is of a certain age (7)
- To do with calves being brought back into popular use (5)
- A green bus is ordered for small groups (9)
- Drugs I consumed during medical treatment (7)
- Meantime in the winter I make friends with the reindeer (7)
- Fish in the country to make one independent (9)
- Regulations include an indefinite number for green places (5)
- Fear about being in the grip of an old man (5)
- Falling for a rotter engaged in reconnoitring the scene of the crime (9)
- Bulb that is safer when smashed (7)
- Conditions of men wandering about in a large expanse of territory? (7)
- Observes something feathered going up and down (9)
- Angry note to the terrorists (5)
- Those who are gone to look at the block (7)
- Stop for a time, taking us in to get rid of the cash (7)

DOWN

- Caught like upper-class person in old garment (7)
- Sally does not hold off — how divine! (9)
- Sound made by a friend over a shortened version of the story (7)
- Duties of a king when surrounded by newsmen (5)
- City-dwellers name ships (9)

- Masses? Lots of them (7)
- Born king but dim (5)
- Scholar shows that arithmetic is looking up (7)
- Muses are about to trace rotten fruit (9)
- Where there are animals about wipe hands which are messy (9)
- Fed up and then exploited, but rendered harmless (7)
- Illness which would make one pass away if one didn't take the waters (7)
- Relatives let loose in the middle of feasts (7)
- Progressive ruler of part of India? (7)
- Injection which turns people upside down inside (5)
- In a yard beside this ancient city there is a great merchant vessel (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1583

B	A	C	K	B	I	T	E	R	T	A	P	E	S
I	A	R	E	K	H	E	H						
P	I	L	L	O	W	S	D	O	Y	E	N	N	E
E	L	A	T	S	M	A	K						
D	R	E	A	D	S	E	Q	U	E	S	T	E	R
R	C												
N	O	S	T	A	L	G	I	A	P	A	S	T	E
I													
C	A	B	O	T	B	L	E	S	S	I	N	G	S
O	R												
D	A	I	R	Y	M	A	I	D	O	R	R	I	S
E	N	E	F	L	W	B	R	U					
H	I	G	R	A	N	T	A	B	A	T	I	N	G
U	E	L	A	R	L	C	A						
S	T	R	U	M	R	E	F	R	E	S	H	E	R

Prizewinners to 1583

Sally Moran (London N1)
Mr J. Worker (Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside)
Mrs W. Proffitt (Larbert, Stirlingshire)

Name _____
Address _____



Chess

THE PLAYERS looked upon it as a recipe for instant crisis, but I would say that the format of 6-game candidates' matches in St John, Canada has been quite a success. Of course, I would be inclined to think that, since the English representatives scored the most emphatic wins. I gave Short's opening game against Sax last week. He was equally convincing in winning the second game with the Black pieces. After such a decisive starting burst he could afford to ease up and still clinch the match $3\frac{1}{2}-1\frac{1}{2}$ by taking a draw from a position of strength (a safe pawn up) in the fifth game. Nigel's conduct of the match indicated that he had plenty in reserve and that his collaboration with John Nunn has been a fruitful partnership.

But if Short was a smooth performer, Speelman sure was a hairy one. I don't see how the Moscow analysts will be able to formulate a plan for dealing with Big Jon, since his theoretical preparation in the opening is pitiful by GM standards. His strength is founded entirely on sheer brain-power at the board, and the antidote to that has yet to be discovered.

By contrast, it was possible to prepare a match-plan against Yasser Seirawan. We liked the American's rather Nimzovitschian positional-style. But we thought we saw a weakness. Yasser liked positionally 'clean' games in which he

could make decisions on principle. But this was linked to a tendency towards passive, liquidating solutions. Such a player is vulnerable when attacked because he does not counter-punch in time, and is also uncomfortable in messy tactics.

Unfortunately, Jon didn't play the openings well enough to launch legitimate attacks. After a nervous draw in the first game, it was Seirawan who piled on the pressure in game 2. But Jon absorbed it all and emerged from defence to a winning endgame when Seirawan overpressed. Yet in the very next game Speelman used White to such little effect that after 28 moves he found himself in the diagram position (see below). Black must have the advantage — 'Two passed pawns are better than one.' (Well, it *ought* to be an old Russian proverb.) The problem for Seirawan is to decide whether he is so close to winning that he can spurn any drawing line:

28... Qc6+ 29. Kh3 Forced — 29. Kg1 Qc2 wins. Rb7 30. Rc1! Qf3 30... Rxe7 31. Rxc6 Rd7 32. Rb6 is a draw, and the same seems to be true of 30... Qxc1 31. Qxb7. 31. Rc7 Rb8 Not 31... Rb5 32. Qe8+ 32. d7 Kh7 33. Rc1 Not 33. d8=Q Rxd8 and 33... b2. b2 34. Re1 Qd5? A time-trouble blunder. After 34... Qf5+ 35. Kg2 b1=Q 36. Rxb1 Qxb1 37. d8=Q Rxd8 38. Qxd8 Qe4+ and... d3 Black should win. 35. Qe8 Qd6 36. Rb1 Qb6? Bad to worse. 36... Qe6+ 37. Qxe6 fxe6 38. Rxb2 Rd8 would avoid defeat. 37.

Qxf7 Qd8 38. Qf5+ Kh8 39. Qe6 d3 40. Rxb2 1-0. The flag on Seirawan's clock fell, but of course he's lost now anyway. An astonishing reversal.

A draw followed in game 4, putting the American 1-3 down. Time for desperate measures, as Seirawan abandoned his chess persona in the fifth game. Dr Jekyll had failed, so why not unleash Mr Hyde?

Speelman-Seirawan, Game 5. QGD to Dutch Defence.

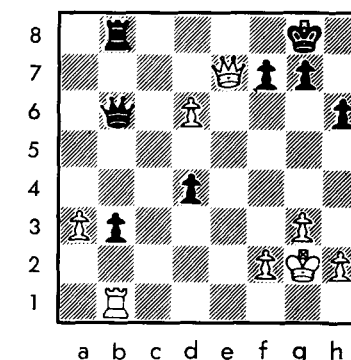
1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 c6 3. e4 e6 4. e3 f5 Reckoning this permissible, now the fianchetto is not on for White. But you should not treat the black square like this. 5. Be2 Nf6 6. 0-0 Bd6 7. b3 Qe7 8. Bb2 Nbd7 9. Ne5 0-0 10. Nd2 g5 11. f4 gxf4 12. exf4 Ne4 13. Nxe4 fxe4 14. Qd2 Nf6 15. c5 Bc7 16. b4 Bd7 17. a4 Ne8 18. Ra3 Ng7 19. Rh3 Be8 20. Bc3 Bg6 21. g4 Bxe5 22. dxe5 The diagonal becomes longer. h5 23. f5! exf5 24. gxh5 e3 25. Qxe3 f4 26. Rxf4 Be4 27. e6 And longer! Nf5 28. Rxf5! Rxf5 29. Qh6 Rg5+ 30. Rg3 Rxc3+ 31. hxc3 Qh7 32. Qf6 Re8 33. Be5 Re7 34. Qg5+ Kf8 35. Bd6 1-0. Speared on the dark squares, in fact.

Meanwhile Yusupov was crushing Ehlvest, Spraggett was making me eat my words about a mis-match by holding Sokolov to 3-3, and Timman and Portisch edged out, respectively, Salov and Vaganian by $3\frac{1}{2}-2\frac{1}{2}$. The big surprise was that Korchnoi seemed to be on the way out, having lost two games to Hjartason. But as we prepared to bid

farewell to the old warrior, he rose from the dust, won back one game, and then fairly clobbered the young Icelandic:

Korchnoi-Hjartason, Game 6. English Hedgehog.

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. e4 b6 3. g3 c5 4. Bg2 Bb7 5. 0-0 e6 6. Nc3 Be7 7. d4 cxd4 8. Qxd4 d6 9. b3 Nbd7 I think he's missed out... a6. Viktor shows why you shouldn't. 10. Nb5 Nc5 11. Rd1 d5 Or is 11... Nfe4 and... Bf6 possible here? 12. cxd5 exd5 13. Bh3 0-0 14. Bb2 a6 15. Nc3 Re8 16. Rac1 Ne6 17. Bxe6 fxe6 18. Na4 b5 19. Nc5 Bc8 20. Ne5 Already it's a bad year for Black's black squares. Bf8 21. Rc2 a5 22. Rde1 Qb6 23. Qf4 Be7 24. Bd4 Qd6 25. Ncd3 Rf8 26. Bc5 1-0. If 26... Qc7 27. Ng6 wins.



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This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed.
(Postcards please.)

☐ A raider wearing a balaclava helmet and dark glasses held up a chemist's shop at gunpoint and demanded a treatment for spotty faces. He handed the assistant a bag at Spilsbury's Pharmacy in North Marine Road, Scarborough and said: "Fill it up with spot cream". Police said they were hunting a man aged between 18 and 20 wearing a blue anorak and jeans. — *The Times* (Christine Frost)

☐ City yuppies in high-stress, mentally-taxing jobs are being offered back-to-nature breaks — milking cows and driving tractors for a weekend. Dorset College of Agriculture has invited stockbrokers to turn stock farmers on a farm in Thomas Hardy country for

which they each pay £129. — *Daily Mail* (George Moor)

☐ In their own interests, nurses should agitate for a higher proportion of men in the profession. If nursing were perceived as a male and female occupation, as are schoolteaching and the Civil Service, for example, there would be a stronger "gut" feeling that nurses' pay should be higher. — *The Guardian* (Alison Prince)

☐ A village nestling in the Wiltshire downs has made special preparations in case of nuclear attack. "We'll set up our temporary emergency HP in the Royal British Legion Club," said Major Swaine. "Once I've gone round with the loudhailer, the WI can come out and help make tea and get rugs." — *Daily Telegraph* (David Bays)

SUMATRA 1905



AS THE SUN SET OVER THE EMPIRE THEY HAD TO CUT DOWN ON FOOD.



BREWED IN GERMANY. DRUNK ALL OVER THE WORLD